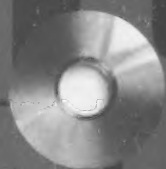


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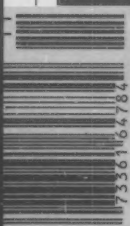
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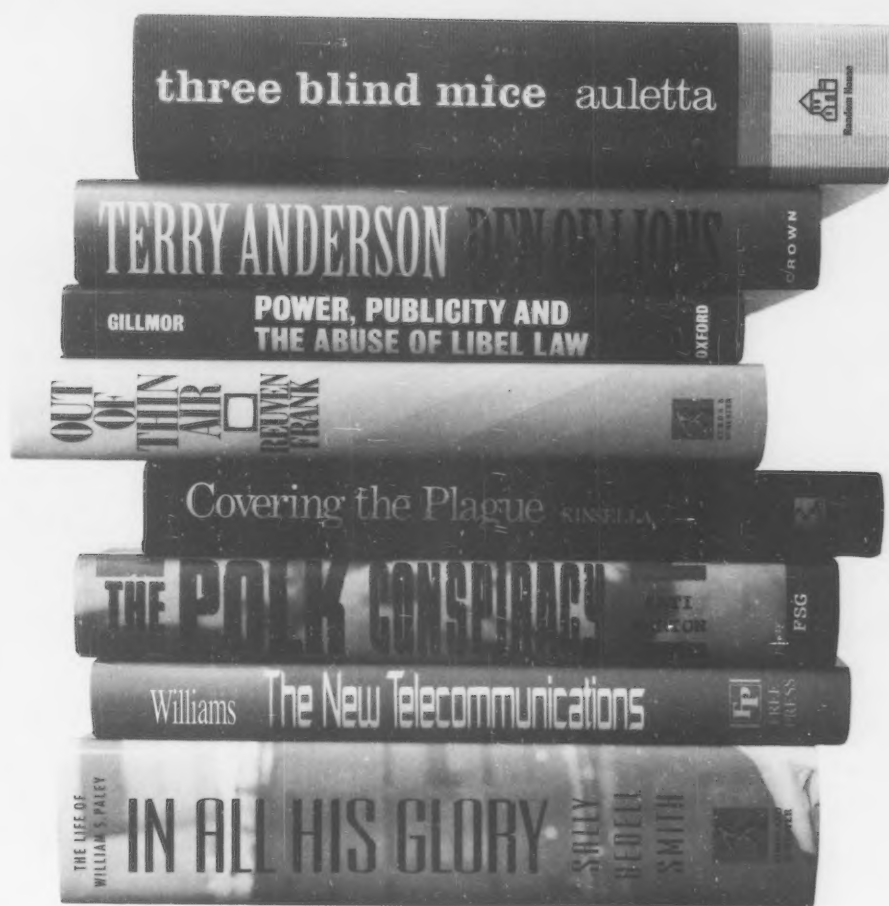
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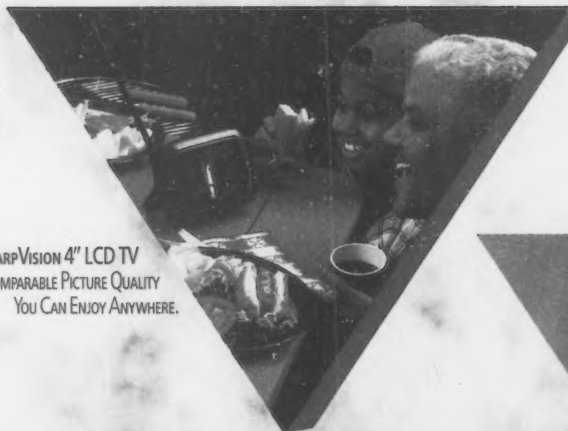


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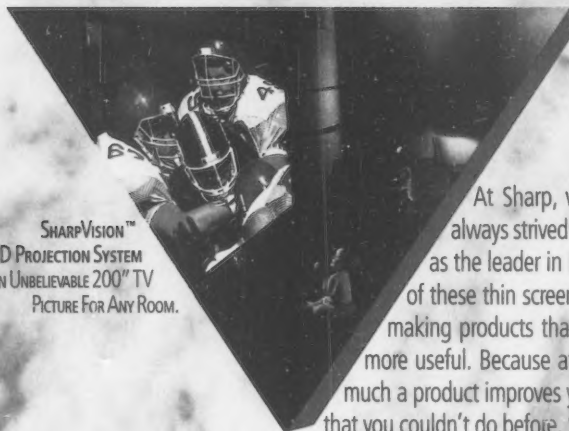
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NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1993

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THE PROFESSION,
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FOR WHAT IS
RIGHT, FAIR,
AND DECENT"

From the founding editorial,
1961



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HEALTH CARE: AN OVERLOOKED OPTION

Thank you for Trudy Lieberman's "Health Care Coverage: Round One" (CJR, September/October) and its account of how managed competition/managed care has been made by the national media — and *The New York Times* in particular — to seem to be the only solution to the nation's health care crisis. It was excellent as far as it went.

I say that because Lieberman assumes that the single payer or Canadian model of reform is the nation's only other option in this arena. There is another choice. Unlike the Canadian plan, which has had at least some press attention, it has had virtually none.

That choice is the "statutory model," various versions of which have long been used in Germany, France, Belgium, Switzerland, The Netherlands, Austria, and Japan. In these countries, health insurance is under the social security umbrella and is funded by payroll taxes or premiums that are set by law, as is a standard benefit package for the entire population.

The money flows to private sector health insurers or, as they are called in some countries, sickness funds. Individuals or heads of households decide which of these plans they want to sign up with. When the insured or their dependents need care, they can select any physician they choose and the doctor and hospital bills (if any) are paid by that carrier.

These systems do not lock patients into a limited number of doctors. Moreover, they are unencumbered by a costly cadre of people who have no direct contact with patients, but who tell them and their doctors what they can and cannot do — features that set them apart from managed competition/managed care. And unlike the Canadian system, which would put the health insurance industry out of business, they preserve a role for it. That is an important consideration, given the health insurance lobby's understandable instinct for self-preservation and its enormous political clout. All but certainly, no bill that wiped out this industry could be enacted by Congress.

Equally important is that statutory systems have done better at controlling costs

than managed competition/managed care could be expected to or than the single payer system has in Canada. Proponents of the Canadian system point with pride to the Congressional Budget Office study which has reported that a single-payer model would be cheaper than managed competition/managed care. What they fail to mention is that, although the United States now spends more of its gross domestic product on health care than any other country, Canada has the dubious distinction of being the runner-up.

It troubles me as a citizen that no thought is being given to a statutory system and it troubles me as a journalist that my own profession has overlooked it. Surely, that is not the hallmark of a socially responsible press.

JUDITH RANDAL

HEALTH AND SCIENCE WRITER
LOVETTSVILLE, VA.

Trudy Lieberman responds: *Apparently Randal missed the point of my article, which was to show the lack of discussion in the press about any alternative other than the managed competition model. It was not to discuss the merits of various systems. My article referred to the Canadian model because it was the only alternative that was receiving any attention. Like Randal, I, too, wish the press would promote a discussion of the merits of other systems before the country rushes headlong into managed competition.*

I have just returned from two months in Japan, where I studied the country's nation-

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For information and entry blanks: Jan Boudart, Medill School of Journalism, Northwestern University, 1845 Sheridan Road, Evanston, Illinois 60208, (708) 491-5661 Fax# (708) 491-3956.

al health-care system. That system, like others found in Europe, does provide insurance through employers and has mechanisms to provide coverage for those not connected to the workforce. These systems also control costs through fee schedules for doctors and hospitals, something that is unlikely in the U.S. because of strong opposition from providers as well as the press, a point I made in my article.

KEEP ON ROCKIN'

Thank you for the bouncy nugget on newspaper rock bands ("It's Only Rock 'n' Roll," CJR September/October). But to compare our band in St. Pete, The Fabulous Nosecaps, to Philly's Bing Bell Band is like comparing The Stones to Randy and the Rainbows. We declare ourselves the longest-running newspaper band — and the best.

We laugh at the Bing Bell Band and the pathetic little newsletter it represents — *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. We challenge them to a battle of the bands, proceeds going to charity. And, by the way, what a silly name for a band!

ROY PETER CLARK

"THE DOCTOR OF ROCK," KEYBOARDIST,
THE FABULOUS NOSECAPS
ST. PETERSBURG, FLA.

I knew we weren't alone when we formed our journalists' rock band in 1989. The Ink Stained Wretches made the rounds at northern New Jersey parties that year, performing such songs as "She's Got a Confidential Source" and "Folo the Ledger," which detailed an unfortunate requirement placed on reporters who were not at *The Star-Ledger* of Newark.

Along with our journalistic rock (not to be confused with rock journalism), our electric band gave birth to an acoustic spinoff, Liberal Media Bias, which performed a few folk-flavored gigs. The band did not survive job changes but left an indelible stamp on its founders and audience. Cassettes are available.

ALAN "WOODSTEIN" ABBEY

ALBANY, N.Y.

MIKE "SPIKE" WALD

MONTCLAIR, N.J.

THAT JAMA VERDICT

Wayne Smith's "JAMA Knows Best," (CJR, September/October) is a welcome addition to a particularly troubling episode in American medical journalism. Smith, however, only scratched the surface.

Was no journalist surprised that President Kennedy's military pathologists — James Humes, M.D., J. Thornton Boswell, M.D.,

and Pierre Finck, M.D. — gave "exclusive" interviews to their personal friend and former military pathologist JAMA editor George D. Lundberg, M.D., and his delegate, Dennis L. Breo?

Was it not odd that all of the interviewees refused to appear with Lundberg before the press to answer questions — particularly after Lundberg called the JAMA JFK coverage "open JAMA presentations"? Was it not even more unusual that, in a contravention of the canons of scientific discourse, none of the pathologists answered even one question of the many put forward in letters to the editor from physician colleagues? The letters were selected by JAMA's own editors as worth publishing and, presumably, of being answered. Is it not odd that JFK's pathologists had Lundberg and Breo report in JAMA that they would answer no further questions, then, astonishingly, one month after refusing to answer physician letters in JAMA (October 7, 1992), Humes answered author Gerald Posner's questions for his recently published *Case Closed*? Not surprisingly, the serious issues raised by physicians' letters in JAMA were not mentioned by Posner. Why?

In JAMA, the autopsists claimed that JFK's skull wound was 10-cm lower than currently accepted by government experts who base their conclusions on "authenticated" photographs and X-rays. JAMA failed to ask the autopsists about this enormous discrepancy and the national press ignored it. If the disputed photographs and X-rays are authentic and accurate, how and why did the autopsists manage to "miss" the correct location of the skull wound by placing it 10-cm too low, and then "miss" the back wound by locating it 5-cm too high, as the forensic pathologists of the House Select Committee on Assassinations determined in 1979?

How did JAMA's "peer-review" fact-checkers miss the fact that AMA member Charles Crenshaw, M.D., who JAMA claimed was not in JFK's trauma room, is named in Warren Commission testimony by at least four Parkland physicians as having been there? Why has JAMA's editor, Lundberg, not done the honorable thing and published a retraction?

GARY L. AGUILAR, M.D.

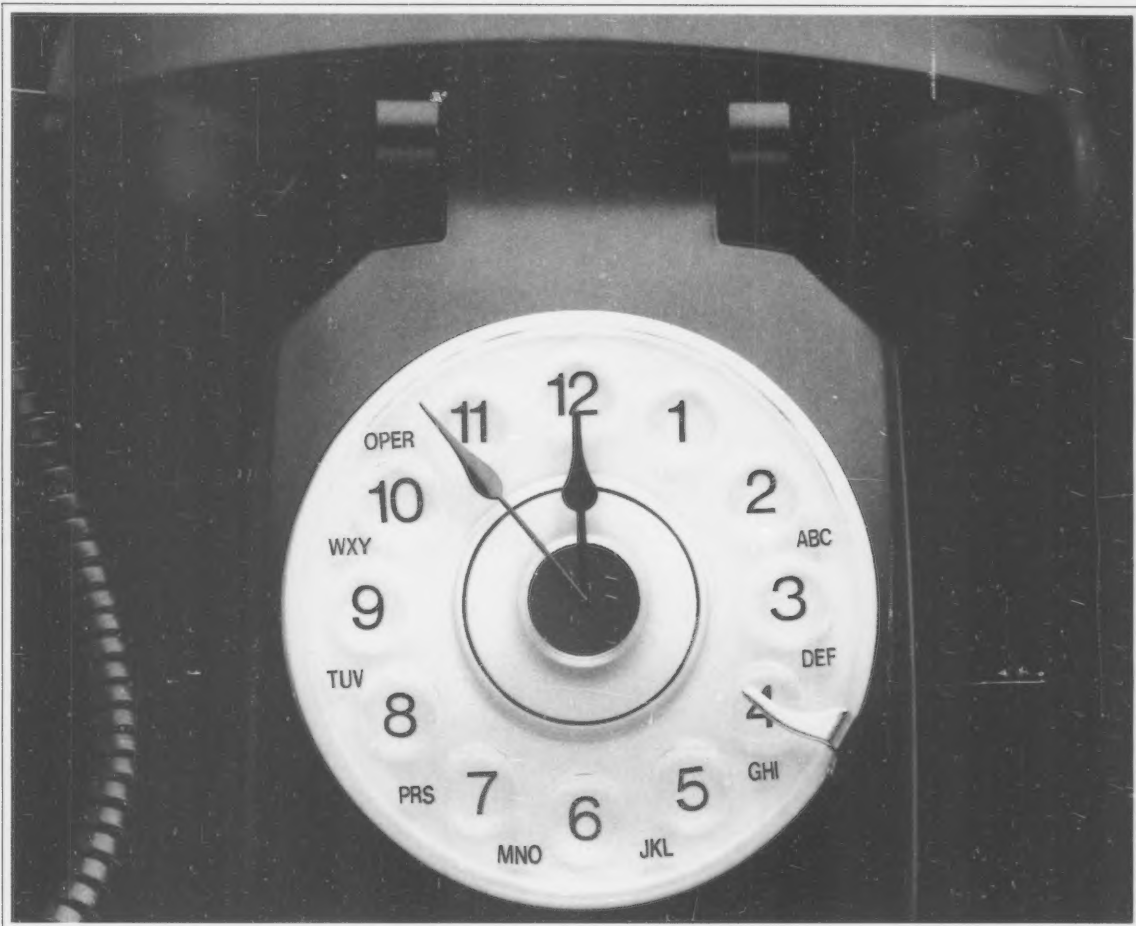
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.

THE LIE

S. Lee Kanner, the journalist who concealed his Jewish identity for fear of losing his job on a small-town daily ("The Lie," CJR, September/October), might be interested in the experience of one who, in a similar situation, took the opposite tack.

Like Kanner, I was a New York Jew who broke into journalism as sports editor of a

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provincial daily. Portland, Indiana, in 1964 was a county-seat town of 7,000 where the adjectives "moral" and "Christian" were used interchangeably, where Jesus was routinely invoked in public discourse, and where some people didn't know what a Jew was. The owner-publisher of my paper, the evening *Commercial-Review*, was a Presbyterian minister's son. Each Thursday the paper published a religious advertising page whose boilerplate extolled the virtues of Christianity over other religions.

Still, unlike Kanner, when people asked my religion, I told them. I didn't make a big deal of it, but occasionally I alluded to my Jewish background in print. After a few years I wrote an entire column about being a Jew in a gentile town.

Some feedback was negative, but the prime consequence of my openness was unexpectedly positive: the town gradually adopted me as a sort of "Jew-in-residence." Local churches, schools, and even the Rotary Club invited me to speak about Judaism; a book club asked me to sit in as a "consultant" for a discussion of James Michener's *The Source*; at the request of the local music club, my wife and I sang Hebrew liturgical songs; and following the Arab-Israel war of 1967, the local chapter of the American Association of University Women arranged a debate between me and a Syrian professor from a nearby college.

The ironic thing about all this activity was that I'd never been an observant Jew and was utterly unqualified to represent the faith. But once treated like an expert, I started behaving like one. For the first time in my life I steeped myself in Judaism — everything from the Bible to Max Dimont to Leon Uris. I've often felt that I learned more about Judaism in my four years in Portland than I learned in my first twenty-two years in New York and Philadelphia.

As for my publisher, not only didn't he fire me, he promoted me to news editor and then editor less than two years after my arrival (when I was not yet twenty-four). Without prompting from me, he also modified the copy on the religion page so as to delete specific references to Christianity.

To be sure, Portland, Indiana, in 1964 was not Hickory, North Carolina, in 1943. What's more, I belonged to a more confident generation of Americans who, unlike Lee Kanner's contemporaries, naively took our economic security for granted.

Still, as I look back on that extraordinary chapter in my life, I can't help feeling that I stumbled upon a provincial town whose inhabitants had been waiting all their lives to demonstrate how broad-minded they were, if only someone would give them the opportunity. I'm glad I gave them that chance, and

sorry Lee Kanner didn't do the same for the people of Hickory. The lesson I learned in Portland — that a journalist really can make a difference in his or her community — has stood me in good stead ever since, and in cities much larger than Portland.

DAN ROTTENBERG
PHILADELPHIA, PA.

Rottenberg is editor of Seven Arts, a new monthly art magazine, and a columnist for The Philadelphia Inquirer.

BEFORE THE SHOOTING BEGINS?

Your title for James Davison Hunter's article in the July/August issue — "Before the Shooting Begins" — seemed irresponsible to me. If it was meant to be facetious, the subject is far too grim, the issues too important to be treated with levity. But if, in fact, the headline means what it says, the message is deadly serious and the subject of overwhelming magnitude. In that case, a whole issue at least should have been constructed around the subject.

ANTHONY PELL
NEW YORK, N.Y.

You have done us all a service with your discussions of our cultural war and the responsibility of journalists to understand and report it accurately. However, James Davison Hunter's contribution, "Before the Shooting Begins," is inappropriately titled and focused: the shooting has already begun with the murder of Dr. David Gunn, and the violence began some time ago with attacks on clinic buildings, personnel, and patients.

Professor Hunter rightly emphasizes that the issues at stake are central and of the utmost gravity. He reminds us that the last time the country debated "the issues of human life, personhood, liberty, and the rights of citizenship," we had a terrible Civil War. True, those issues formed the subtext, but what brought on the war was not the debate, but a series of moves by a minority (slaveholders) to gain control of the government and impose its will on the majority, moves such as the Dred Scott decision, the Fugitive Slave Law, and "bleeding Kansas." When people misread history, they diminish our capacity to profit from its lessons. One major lesson of the Civil War is that American democracy was and is peculiarly vulnerable to obstruction and manipulation by determined minorities.

Professor Hunter is altogether mistaken when he says that the right to have an abortion is put forward as a fundamental right that transcends democratic deliberation. Just the opposite is true. The Supreme Court has ruled that the right to choose abortion is pro-

TECTED by the Constitution (in particular, the Ninth Amendment). Feminists have worked tirelessly to insure that this ruling be validated through the electoral process. Abortion rights have figured in national discussion and in political campaigns across the land. "The Year of the Woman" was the year of women (and some men) for choice.

It is unacceptable to equate abortion rights advocates with their opponents. While both may offend onlookers when they meet at the barricades screaming epithets at each other, the fact remains that the pro-choice people are defending a right rooted in the Constitution, one supported by a majority of Americans and one widely validated in elections. Since the anti-abortionists admit that their objective is to close down abortion services, they are attempting to nullify the law of the land, to thwart the will of the majority, and to cancel electoral results.

Professor Hunter suggests that journalists could reduce the confrontational quality of the abortion rights conflict by learning why clinic personnel risk death to serve the women who come to them and why anti-abortionists risk arrest. Can it be that clinic personnel have had to watch women die from illegal abortions and know that such abortions were the principal cause of pregnancy-related deaths before abortion was decriminalized? Can it be that they know how desperate women can be when they find themselves experiencing catastrophic pregnancies?

I will not speculate on why anti-abortionists behave as they do.

JEANNE RICHIE, R.N.
SAN PABLO, CALIF.

CULTURE WAR (CONT'D)

Regarding James Davison Hunter's "Before the Shooting Begins," I believe that there are many journalists who can justifiably object to Hunter's assumptions about "elite, urban" cultural bias.

Doesn't Hunter realize that many reporters worked their way through community colleges and then went on to a university with a college-loan program? Many continued to work right up until the first internship (very little pay). Those reporters are the daughters and sons of policemen, firemen, factory workers, waitresses, nurses, and bus drivers. If there is a cultural elitism, I suspect it is embedded in the colleges of the East Coast, long known for a syndrome of superiority.

What is with this "tone deafness" he identifies? I believe that any good liberal arts program requires the student to study a language and a science, such as sociology or anthropology. English writing courses that emphasize "writing across the curriculum"

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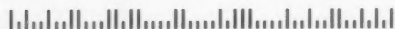
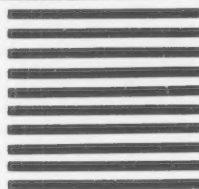
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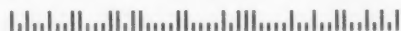
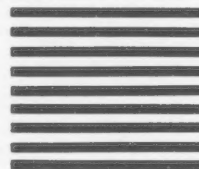
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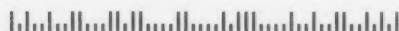
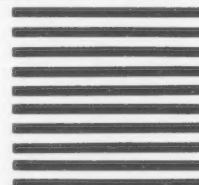
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quickly alert the journalism major to the cultural mix a reporter will face early in his or her career. It would behoove Hunter to look at how colleges prepare students for jumping into the culture war.

FRAN MITCHELL
AUSTIN, TEXAS

Your three articles on covering the culture war were trenchant, though understandably aimed more at coverage of this phenomenon than at the religious right itself.

Unlike the journalists you describe as having little knowledge of what the religious right is actually saying, I watch a great deal of the Trinity Broadcasting Network on cable TV in a spirit of non-Christian curiosity. TBN presents a broad spectrum of Protestant televangelists, most of whom stick to religion.

However, the ministers who *do* propagandize for the right are enough to send a shudder through your soul. For example, one popular televangelist who dabbles in politics recently said that he did not believe in majority rule. There is a word for that, of course; you can ask the ghost of Mussolini about the fine details of fascism.

Also, during the 1992 campaign, I saw Pat Robertson one day tell his TV sidekick that he didn't believe any non-Christian should hold a political office. His assistant was flabbergasted. "You didn't really mean that, did you, Pat?" To which Robertson replied, "I certainly did!"

In all fairness, I should add that only a few of the many ministers I watch on TBN are openly involved in the religious right cause and that one of the most right-wing of the televangelists has a voice-over trailer to his program that states "The foregoing has been a full-length paid commercial." Strange words, but reasonably honest, I think.

GLEN HENEXSON
DELANO, CALIF.

WRONGHEADED: TWO CORRECTIONS

Two headings that accompanied the *Culture War Resource Guide* (CJR, July/August) — "The View from the Right" and "The View from the Left" — were added as a design element by CJR's editors and were not the work of Political Research Associates of Cambridge, Massachusetts, which prepared the guide. (A letter calling attention to the inaccuracy of these labels appeared in the September/October issue.)

A headline in the September/October issue that read "Danny Schechter's Rights & Wrongs" was misleading inasmuch as it suggested that Schechter was the program's sole producer. As Schechter notes in a recent letter: "Rory O'Connor and I created the con-

Positive economic indicators:

"That sound you hear is the hum of factory machinery, the rattle of auto assembly lines, the whine of the drilling rig. **It's the sound of American manufacturing slowly coming back to life as the economic recovery huffs and puffs along...**"

— "Roaring Back: Key U.S. Industries Are on the Rebound," *The Los Angeles Times*, 9/5/93

• •

"Companies plan the biggest increase for this quarter, followed by a smaller rise in the fourth. The funds will likely go for new equipment, especially machinery that raises the productivity of workers... The Labor Dept.'s latest revision of the productivity data showed that non-farm output per hour worked fell 1.3% in the second quarter. **But manufacturers alone lifted productivity by a hefty 5.2%.**"

— "Business Outlook," James C. Cooper and Kathleen Madigan, *Business Week*, 9/27/93

• •

"Remarkably, manufacturing output per hour worked kept right on rising during the 1990-91 recession, even though in prior recessions it usually fell as factory production slumped... **In the first half of this year, when overall business productivity fell at an annual rate of more than 1 percent, manufacturing productivity continued to rise at a 5.3 percent rate.**"

— John M. Berry, *The Washington Post*, 9/29/93

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cept and work jointly as executive producers. The show itself is a Globalvision production and has been, from the get-go, a collaborative effort by a hardworking and underpaid team." This we knew, but brushed aside in our effort to come up with a heading that would parallel "Don Hewitt's Durable Hour."

DON'T PUFF, GET TOUGH!

"Don Hewitt's Durable Hour" (CJR, September/October) reads like a press release for producer Don Hewitt. It cites the popularity of *60 Minutes*, its clout as a powerbroker, the profits it generates for

CBS, and its influence on other news shows. What the article *didn't* cover was Hewitt's influence on journalism. With its hidden camera and one-sided reporting, *60 Minutes* makes a mockery of balanced, informative reporting. Most journalists I know refuse to watch a show that is more interested in theatrics and ratings than the truth.

GARY M. STERN
NEW YORK, N.Y.

GUARDING GUINIER

Regarding your article "From Legal Scholar to Quota Queen" (CJR, September/October),

the public arrived at the perfectly rational conclusion that the nominee to be the nation's chief pencil-pusher in the Civil Rights Division wasn't emotionally or intellectually objective enough to gain the confidence of the nation. The press did its job; it doesn't deserve a partisan bashing from a premier journalism review.

LAURENCE D. COHEN
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
THE YANKEE INSTITUTE FOR PUBLIC
POLICY STUDIES
GIASTONBURY, CONN.

To suggest, as Laurel Leff does, that the press should be forced to engage in exhaustive examination of abstruse legal scholarship before writing a word about appointments such as Guinier's is ludicrous. It is the duty of journalists to report the news as it happens, not filter it through a myriad of "experts" or legal scholars so as not to offend the nominee (or, perhaps more accurately, the powerful interest groups behind such a nominee). It strikes me as curious that there was no such group consciousness-raising on the part of the media after interest groups savagely distorted Robert Bork's views during his nomination for the Supreme Court.

MICHAEL CALLAHAN
SENIOR EDITOR
NEW JERSEY MONTHLY
MORRISTOWN, N.J.

NEVER SAY NEVER

In his letter taking CJR to task for awarding him a Dart (Darts and Laurels, CJR, May/June; Letters, CJR, September/October) *Wisconsin State Journal* editor Frank Denton seems not to understand that it wasn't just the killing of the news brief that prompted the Dart, but his own sanctimonious column of a few days earlier, in which he contended that his paper would never, ever, allow an advertiser to influence its coverage.

Frank Denton deserved his Dart, and his letter proves it.

BILL LUEDERS
NEWS EDITOR
ISTHMUS
MADISON, WIS.

AUTHENTIC EXPERIENCE

I empathize with Jill Nelson's description of what it's like to be a black woman in the newsroom in *Volunteer Slavery: My Authentic Negro Experience* (Short Takes, CJR, September/October).

My first newspaper job — as a zone reporter for *The Orlando Sentinel* — introduced me to a world where hungry young

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journalists (of both genders and from all types of ethnic backgrounds) vied for a thimbleful of desirable "downtown" jobs.

In this competitive setting, I think some of my colleagues harbored resentment about me because of my race and gender. And I almost always felt the editors considered me more a minority hire than a real reporter. "You can go anywhere — you're a twofer," one white, male newspaper editor at the local college told me. (Never mind the fact that I had a master's degree, good grades, and several impressive fellowships.)

Others actually blamed the recruitment of people like me for their own failures. When *Wall Street Journal* reporter Brett Pulley was hired from the *Sentinel* to work in the *Journal's* Chicago office, several of my co-workers openly groused about reverse racism.

At one weekend gathering at which I was the only black, a former co-worker — a person I considered a friend — turned nasty. "Well, I guess I should just go paint my face with black tar," the young reporter said when the topic turned to Pulley's new job. "Maybe then I can get a job at the *Journal*, too."

I've moved on to larger papers since my two-and-a-half-year stint in Orlando. I've worked for the *St. Petersburg Times* and am now at the *Chicago Tribune*, where there are so many talented African-American reporters that it is hard to blame race for failure or success. But even now there are times when I feel like a human question mark walking through the newsroom — a punctuation that is erased only if and when I write a good story.

I will not argue with the fact that some newspapers are aggressively recruiting blacks, women, and people from other ethnic backgrounds. But that is where the fairy tale ends.

Minorities and women have unique viewpoints and experiences to bring to all types of stories. They also have better access to certain communities and people. But until they are mentored, trusted, and given the chance to be a part of the real machinery of daily newspapers in the way white male reporters are, they will continue to be "Negro stand-ins" and the "colored writer writing 'color' pieces," just as Nelson says.

JANITA POE
STAFF WRITER
CHICAGO TRIBUNE

**THOMAS-HILL, BROCK,
MAYER, ABRAMSON,
CJR, ET AL**

It isn't often that CJR receives as many letters as it has in connection with the Laurel

awarded to The New Yorker and contributing writers Jane Mayer and Jill Abramson for their critique of David Brock's The Real Anita Hill: The Untold Story (CJR, July/August). (And it isn't often that so many letters should make the same points in much the same way.) The letter writers chided CJR for failing to point out that Mayer and Abramson were working on a book of their own about the Clarence Thomas nomination, and rebuked us for failing to Dart The New Yorker for refusing to print Brock's reply to the Mayer-Abramson article.

The New Yorker's executive editor,

Hendrick Hertzburg, subsequently explained in a letter published in The New Republic that his magazine had judged Brock's 4,000-word rebuttal to be "boring, pointless...and nugatory."

Readers interested in this politically charged affray will want to read "Jane and Jill and Anita Hill," a revised version of Brock's letter to The New Yorker, which was published in the August issue of The American Spectator, as well as Kathleen M. Sullivan's "The Hill-Thomas Mystery" in the August 12 issue of The New York Review of Books.



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CHRONICLE

A FREE PALESTINIAN PRESS?

The Death of a Daily Marks a Turning Point

Like the September 13 signing of the PLO-Israeli peace agreement, the June 23 shutdown of *Al-Fajr*, the East Jerusalem-based daily long seen as a barometer of Palestinian nationalism, marked the end of an era in Palestinian politics. Many Palestinians hope that it will also mark the start of a new pluralistic and free press built on the foundation laid down by *Al-Fajr* in its better days.

To a large extent it was the increasing diplomatic isolation and financial problems of the PLO after the gulf war, as well as the growing economic desperation of the population in the West Bank and Gaza, that forced PLO chairman Yasir Arafat to make peace with Israel. The same factors forced publisher Paul Ajlouny, an American of Palestinian descent who lives in New York, to tell *Al-Fajr*'s remaining forty journalists to look for new jobs. "I was losing \$25,000 a month," Ajlouny says. "I just couldn't make it."

Before 1967, the year *Al-Fajr* was founded, most of the newspapers in the occupied territories were little more than propaganda sheets published by the Jordanian government and its allies. *Al-Fajr*, with its screaming headlines, sophisticated news stories, and combative editorials, responded to the needs of a new generation, an educated and professional elite who saw the PLO as their representative and who are today

leading the Palestinians toward independence.

The newspaper rallied support in the territories against the Israeli occupation and constantly battled against military censorship. Often the censors cut not only editorials and articles, but also translations from the American and Israeli press. And it did not hesitate to attack Palestinian sacred cows, especially King Hussein and the pro-Jordanian establishment in the territories.

ing ground for PLO apparatchiks who specialized in reprinting press releases and speeches by the organization's leaders.

As *Al-Fajr* dulled down, it lost readers to the two other major dailies in the territories — *Al-Quds* and *A-Nahar*, both of them more politically independent. At the end, *Al-Fajr*'s circulation had dwindled to 2,000 from a peak of more than 10,000.

Will the demise of *Al-Fajr* make room for a new kind of Palestinian jour-



FINA CASTELNUOVO/ONYX PICTURES

In anticipation of broadcast licenses, Palestinian journalists have been doing run-throughs

In the '80s, reflecting changing attitudes within the PLO, *Al-Fajr* began to call for negotiations with Israel. But by 1993, as the PLO and its supporters in the West Bank were gradually turning into a formalized and somewhat stuffy political establishment, the once-lively *Al-Fajr* was gradually turning into a Palestinian version of *Pravda*, a dump-

nalism? The withdrawal of the Israeli military from the West Bank and Gaza, including the end to censorship there, removes one big obstacle to the development of a free Palestinian press. And one of the clauses in the Israeli-PLO agreement removes another: following the signing of the peace agreement, Palestinians expect that the Labor government in Jerusalem will begin licensing Palestinian broadcasting stations in the territories, something Israel had nev-

er allowed. Plans for radio and television stations in the occupied territories have already been approved by the PLO.

Palestinian journalists have started practicing. Led by *Al-Quds* reporter Daoud Kuttab, thirty-five of them have been operating something called the Experimental Television News project, which was financed by a \$27,000 grant from a Swedish organization. The journalists produced a news report that was shown on closed-circuit television before a small Palestinian audience in an East Jerusalem theater last July.

The project pointed up some of the pitfalls for an independent Palestinian press. Although the half-hour broadcast included an interview with a critic of Arafat, it was produced in "consultation" with the members of the Palestinian delegation to the peace talks with Israel — suggesting that Israeli control could be replaced with supervision by the new Palestinian government. The area's weak economy will pose another challenge.

But many Palestinians hope that their emerging journalism will become a free press model for the entire Arab world. Palestinian journalists say that they and their colleagues, having been trained in Western universities, having covered the occupied territories on a part- or full-time basis for American and European media organizations, and having worked closely with members of the muckraking Israeli press, will find it hard to accept anything less than a Western model of a press-government relationship.

Plans are already in place for a new monthly, based in Jerusalem, that will be jointly edited by former *Al-Fajr* editor Hannah Siniara and Haim Shur, the former editor of the now-defunct *New Outlook*. Siniara, meanwhile, says he is seeking investors to back a revival of *Al-Fajr*, while Ajlouny is concentrating on reviving the English-language weekly edition, which was suspended after the daily was shut down.

"When we fought for an independent Palestinian state, we also fought for a free press," he says. "If we won't have a free press, we will not deserve the new state we won."

Leon T. Hadar
Hadar teaches Middle East politics at The American University in Washington, D.C.

WATCHING THE WEST

The Duo Who Keep *High Country News* aloft

For a decade now Betsy Marston and her husband, Ed, have published *High Country News* out of a remodeled feed store in blink-and-you'll-miss-it Paonia, Colorado. During that time the paper has won top awards for environmental reporting and added readers in every state, some 12,000 in all, up from 3,000 when they took it over. Governmental agencies like the National Park Service, the U.S. Forest Service, and the Bureau of Land Management route office copies to dozens of employees, and influential western politicians like Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt and Colorado Representative Pat Schroeder are longtime subscribers.

Not bad for a couple of New Yorkers.

The Marstons met at the student newspaper at the City College of New York. After they married, in 1966, Ed taught college physics and wrote a textbook; Betsy became New York's first woman news anchor, on public television station WNET. But in 1974 they decided to leave the hectic life of the city for a year to spend time with their young children in a cabin they owned in Colorado.

"When we got to Colorado we couldn't handle leisure for long," Betsy Marston recalls. "Ed got a job writing environmental impact statements for the Forest Service and I made candles. We were bored and decided to start a paper."

Two papers, actually, one local and one regional, both based in Paonia (the regional paper folded; the local paper was sold). Then, in 1983 — "the worst year of my life," Betsy says — the Marstons took over publication of *High Country News*, which had been founded in 1970 by Tom Bell, an environmental journalist and rancher. "It was on the brink of disaster," Betsy says. "But it had loyal readers. During the first couple of years Ed and I took turns paying each other a salary of \$11,000. Often we put the children to sleep in the building while we finished the paper. In the beginning, it was just Ed and me."

High Country News these days covers ten western states in sixteen pages. It relies on a full-time staff of eight, a network of more than 100 free-lancers, and three to five interns to produce the biweekly paper. So far, more than 100 interns have spent three months each volunteering for the paper, researching and writing articles on complex issues like community development and western water rights. "I like to think we're seeding the West with environmental

Betsy and Ed Marston run a newspaper with a view



“Lately, some misguided media folk have been wasting a lot of time trying to figure out *who I am*. This is very annoying ... I am a pseudonymous columnist, not a real person. And every time someone says they don't believe in pseudonymous columnists, they only believe in real people, why, there's a little pseudonymous columnist somewhere who falls down dead.”

“Margo Magee” in her *Buzz* magazine column, “Our Times,” which covers the *Los Angeles Times*.

reporters,” Betsy says. The paper covers public land issues, water rights, electricity, and grazing. Two series have been published as books — *Western Water Made Simple* (1987) and *Reopening The Western Frontier* (1989). A recent issue on grazing covered both sides of the complicated issue, with articles like THIS RANCHER STICKS TO BIOLOGY and WILDERNESS AND CATTLE DON'T MIX, which helps explain why the paper has broadened its readership to include ranchers, miners, and loggers, as well as environmentalists.

This summer a *High Country News* admirer who died of asthma left the paper \$300,000 to use as the Marstons see fit. They plan to use some of the money to publish more books and possibly to develop a radio program.

The paper is not without its critics. “I read through it, but not religiously,” says Dave Mehlhaff, communications director for the National Cattlemen's Association. “It's a pretty good publication, but it has moved more to the left in recent years. There are more environmental and animal rights' viewpoints.”

Gary McVicker, a Bureau of Land Management official, sees a swing in another direction: “In the past, they mainly garnered support from the environmental movement, but now they are swinging towards finding solutions to problems. That's positive reporting.”

Rebecca Burkhead

Burkhead, a former National Park Service ranger, is studying environmental journalism at the University of Colorado.

OBSCURE NO MORE

A Billionaire's Death; A Foundation's Rise

When he died this past April at the age of eighty-six while cruising off the coast of Italy, billionaire publisher Donald W. Reynolds released his grip on one of the largest of the few remaining privately held media empires in the U.S., the Donrey Media Group. It included fifty-two daily newspapers, fifty non-dailies, five cable TV systems, and one TV station. *Forbes* magazine put the value of his total holdings — even in a media recession — at just under \$1 billion, and *Fortune* magazine routinely listed Reynolds on its annual list of the world's richest people.

But in death, as in life, Reynolds veiled his financial dealings in secrecy, with his probate and trust file sealed by Clark County court officials in Las Vegas. The secrets in those files should be more than items of idle curiosity for journalists: a Donrey Media spokesperson has confirmed that Reynolds left most of his fortune to the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation, Inc. — up to now an obscure nonprofit enterprise. Such a bequest could put the Reynolds Foundation on the same economic footing as the Freedom Forum and the Knight Foundation, charitable journalistic mammoths with reported assets of well over \$600 million each.

Although Donrey Media officials say Reynolds did not own the Donrey Media Group outright, they say he owned enough of it to ensure that his bequest will be sizable. The one man who knows just how big the new foundation will be — and what type of journalism projects it will fund — is Fred W. Smith, chairman of the board of directors of the Reynolds Foundation and chief executive officer of the Donrey Media Group. Smith at first agreed to, and then canceled, an interview with *CJR*. Company officials say he was in the midst of a series of complex negotiations to sell the bulk of the Donrey Media Group to the Stephens Group Inc., an Arkansas-based, privately held

investment banking and brokerage firm. The proceeds of that sale would form the bulk of the foundation's assets.

In the past, the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation has been generous to student journalists and to a handful of universities. It provided two-year scholarships of \$5,000 each to students in journalism programs in Arkansas, Texas, California, Missouri, Nevada, Hawaii, and Oklahoma. At one participating campus, California State University at Chico, the Reynolds scholarship was by far the largest single scholarship at the school.

In recent years, the foundation has given money to three universities, including a \$9 million 1988 gift to Reynolds's alma mater, the University of Missouri at Columbia, for a new alumni center. At the time, the gift was the largest ever given to that institution.

Still, the foundation has generally shunned publicity. The newspaper group, too, can be secretive. *USA Today* reported that company representatives refused to give it a copy of a press release announcing the impending sale of the Donrey Media Group. The press release had been distributed to member newspapers of the Donrey chain.

In one of the few profiles of him to appear in recent years, *Forbes* magazine described Reynolds — who started in the newspaper business with \$300 — as “consistent in ruthlessness, [with] a single-minded devotion to business and not much use for compassion.” The magazine noted that Reynolds's three children will receive trust income of \$50,000 a year for life, but will be left only \$1 if they unsuccessfully contest his will.

In life, Reynolds had little use for journalism's elite. But should his final will and testament indeed provide the Donald Reynolds Foundation with most of his money, the name Reynolds may some day be uttered in the same breath as Knight and Nieman, Poynter and Pulitzer.

George Thurlow

Thurlow is professional in residence at the journalism department of California State University at Chico. He was editor of the *Chico News and Review* from 1981 to 1991.

FOR THE REPORTER

Back in July 1991, a reporter was shot in the groin with a dum-dum bullet fired by a Serbian sniper in Croatia. He had been in his car, which was clearly marked Press, searching for a young and inexperienced colleague who was late returning from the field. The wounded reporter bled to death.

In his pocket was found a photocopy of a poem, written in English and signed by one Slavko Bronzic of the town of Osijek, of whom no more is known. It read:

To the Reporter

*Write down as much as you can,
my friend,
but report to the world not only
the number of the people who got killed
on the golden fields of Slavonia.*

*Because a number has no name
and no stolen future.
Report to the world,
it was Johann and William,
and Victor and Francesco,
and Gabriel and György,
who got killed,
and that maybe tomorrow
you will get killed, too.*

*Write down as much as you can,
my friend,
but report to the world not only the
number of all who got killed
on the bleeding fields of Slavonia.*



Report to the world that the dead reporter in whose bloody pocket that poem was found was Egon Scotland. He had gray hair and a mustache, and was forty-two years old, a German who wrote for *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, in Munich.

He had spent part of 1989 and 1990 in the U.S., as a John S.

Knight professional journalism fellow at Stanford University. There, he had studied Balkan history and the Serbo-Croatian language. His Stanford friends describe him as a man who tried his hand at everything, from metal sculpture to clothing design, someone who made and wore his own multipocketed vest. They describe him as a man of intense professional dedication and voracious intellectual curiosity, someone who could be aggravating, captivating, eccentric, endearing.

Some of those friends established a fund at Stanford, to which people can contribute money in Scotland's name. It will be used to permit other journalists to study the kinds of ethnic and national conflicts that he died trying to explain.

The address for the memorial fund for Egon Scotland is: c/o John S. Knight Fellowships, Department of Communication, Stanford University, Stanford, Calif. 94305-2050. Checks should be made out to Stanford University and earmarked for the Egon Scotland Memorial Fellowship.

WHAT, NO STRINGS?

The Italian Tradition and *L'Indipendente*

In Italy, the rule has long been that, without the support of a political party and a major industrial group, the life of a newspaper will be nasty, brutish, and short. *L'Indipendente* tried to buck that tradition, and failed. In the finest tradition of Italian ambiguity, however, it is difficult to know whether to mourn, or celebrate, that failure.

L'Indipendente began publication in November 1991, with a start-up investment of \$30 million from a group of northern Italian investors led by investment banker Guido Roberto Vitale (the brother of Alberto Vitale, c.e.o. of Random House). It was led by well-meaning Italian journalists who wanted an objective, English-style publication.

"The idea was to found a quality newspaper, which Italy does not really have," says founding editor-in-chief and shareholder Ricardo Franco Levi. "In Italy, newspapers are aimed simultaneously at university professors and taxi drivers. We wanted to split that target, and we also wanted to separate news from opinion, something not usually done in Italy. And we wanted to be rigorously independent, as the masthead suggested."

Within three months, however, Levi had been relieved of his duties by mutinous investors, and the newspaper quickly metamorphosed into yet another fire-breathing, ideological, and party-oriented newspaper.

All of this happened during a time of unprecedented change in Italy. The fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the U.S.S.R. upset a complex but stable network of political and economic alliances in the nation, where the Western bloc's largest freely elected Communist party had been perpetually held at bay by complicated alliances led by the dominant, pro-church Christian Democrats and the smaller, pro-U.S. Socialists. Newspapers and industrial groups fit into that array of alliances and pacts.

When the Soviet empire broke up, the Italian Communist party did too. Meanwhile, the largest corruption scandal in postwar Western Europe erupted, and in its wake a new political party burst onto the stage — the Northern League, dedicated to freeing the “productive north” from the “parasitic south” of Italy. The league supports the idea of replacing the Italian state with three federated regions; it opposes immigration, crusades against corruption, and is generally seen as a more or less articulate howl of populist rage from a long-misgoverned nation. It has worrisome overtones, with some of its extremists accused of racism and anti-Semitism. The party’s charismatic leader, Umberto Bossi, recently said that the earth is divided into the civilized world and the uncivilized Muslims.

What seems to have happened to *L’Indipendente* during this turbulent period is that after a brief and unrewarding experiment in truly independent — if uninspired — journalism, it fell back on the standard Italian formula of support from a political party — the Northern League. The paper’s

SOUND BITE

“For the first time, an equal number of [television] stories on a major breaking news story were filed by female reporters as by male reporters.”

The August Tyndall Report — which tracks network new coverage — about the flood of 1993.

major campaign, like the league’s, has been one of strong support for the government magistrates who are leading Italy’s corruption probes. While avoiding the excesses of the league’s xenophobia, *L’Indipendente* has criticized the government’s failure to effectively regulate immigration.

In former editor Levi’s eyes, *L’Indipendente* made a cynically opportunistic alliance with the new political party and with an Italian financial and broadcasting powerhouse. “The shareholders took fright at the most difficult moment,” he says,

recalling the rapid decline in circulation, from an initial high of almost 200,000 to what Levi says was about 30,000, and what others estimate as being as low as 15,000 by February 1992. “They decided to move in the direction of the league, to establish an alliance at the moment of the league’s greatest success.

“And there are rumors, which I believe are well-founded,” Levi continues, “that there is explicit support from the television networks of Silvio Berlusconi.” Berlusconi is Italy’s leading broadcaster — Italy’s *only* broadcaster, aside from the state — with four networks.

Others, however, say that Levi himself must bear some blame for what came to pass, and for the arrival of Vittorio Feltri, an editor with a reputation for saving dying publications and a knack for making valuable political alliances while remaining beholden to no one. “Levi was a nice person, but no leader,” says *L’Indipendente*’s first arts editor, Marco Ausenda. “After three days, no one read the paper anymore. Then they called Vittorio Feltri,

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CJR

and in six months he had turned it into the mouthpiece of the northern movement, and raised circulation to 100,000."

"Levi produced a sterile paper, with no gossip," says Alessandra Ravetta, editor and owner of *Prima Comunicazione*, the monthly of the Italian publishing trade. "In the end, the paper became so independent it had no identity. Then Feltri came in, and he was a different sort of person. He is a force of nature, very bright, and he just happens to be crusading on the same wavelength as the league."

Vitale, who represents the paper's investors, is happy with the way things have gone. "We chose Feltri to protect the investments of my clients," he says. "Levi's paper appealed to maybe twenty-five hundred people in Italy. I now have some hopes of seeing a return on my investment." Vitale expects to come close to breaking even by the end of the year.

Antony Shugaar

Shugaar is a free-lance writer who divides his time between New York and Milan.

SURRENDER STORIES

An L.A. Reporter's Arresting Work

When KTLA-TV reporter Warren Wilson called a Compton, California, police detective in early April to ask whether they were looking for a guy named Regis Deon Thomas, there was a long pause on the other end of the line.

The police in this city near Los Angeles had yet to release Thomas's name publicly, though he was wanted in connection with the slaying of two police officers six weeks earlier. In the ongoing search for Thomas, the police had raided the homes of several of his friends and relatives, knocking down one door with a battering ram.

Thomas, fearing police revenge for the murders, had called KTLA, saying he wanted to surrender to Wilson — on air — to ensure his safety. So, after getting the go-ahead from a detective in



KTLA-TV's Warren Wilson

Compton, Wilson met Thomas at a secret location, patted him down, interviewed him, then drove him to a police station and handed him over — all of this captured on tape and played on the KTLA nightly news.

Thomas was the fifth suspect in the Compton case who tried, or whose friends or relatives tried, to seek out Wilson. In the end, three of the five prime suspects in the case actually gave themselves up to the fifty-eight-year-old reporter.

Wilson didn't invent this kind of story, but he's certainly got it down. Over the last eleven years, he has brokered ten such surrenders, six of them related to police killings. He twice flew to Las Vegas to bring suspects back to Los Angeles. The most recent surrender, in September, took place in Beverly Hills, where a twenty-four-year-old wanted in connection with two robberies there turned himself in. As is often the case, the impetus came from the suspect's mother.

Wilson, the son of a North Carolina sharecropper, says he is drawn to the frightened and isolated suspects — most of them black, as is Wilson — who have called him in need. But he gets involved in the surrenders, he says, for two main reasons: "If my intervention can prevent somebody dying on either side — that is one of the reasons I do it." In the next breath, he adds: "It's a big story to have someone surrender to you who is armed and dangerous."

Local journalists return a split verdict on Wilson's surrender stories. Some praise him for defusing what are potentially violent situations. "What is the alternative?" asks Tomas Lewis, man-

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aging editor of the Wave Newspaper Group, a chain of weeklies in south Los Angeles. "You turn the suspect down, they remain at large and maybe kill someone else."

Wilson's own news director, naturally, is among the boosters. "It's a public service," Warren Cereghino says of the taped surrenders. "Maybe it's stretching the notion of public service, but that's what it is."

Los Angeles Times media critic Howard Rosenberg, however, wonders whether the public sees Wilson as an independent journalist or as a sort of quasi-lawman. In a May 7 column, Rosenberg criticized Wilson for participating in the surrenders he covers. "The messenger should not eclipse, or even compete with, the message," he wrote. In the same column he criticized Wilson's 1988 decision to accept \$25,000 in reward money from the Los Angeles City Council for bringing in the Las Vegas subject. Wilson says he donated most of it to south Los Angeles charities. As for future reward offers, Wilson says he will evaluate them when the time comes.

Ernest R. Sander

Sander works for *The Associated Press* in Los Angeles.

LOGGING ON

Did a P.R. Firm Ax Forest Coverage?

Trees are news in British Columbia, where one out of five jobs is tied to the forest industry, and where hundreds of environmentalists have been arrested in recent years for blockading logging roads. But insightful, uncompromising environmental reporting may be a disappearing species in *The Vancouver*

company. By May of this year, that figure had dropped to 40 percent. The alliance itself claims that between 80 and 90 percent of the media coverage arising from its press releases and staged media events has been "positive."

But nowhere did the alliance have a more profound effect than at *The Vancouver Sun* — the biggest newspaper in the province, with a daily circulation of 260,000. Delegations of forest company officials and alliance members became a common sight in the *Sun*'s editorial offices. Senior reporter Mark



Sun, B.C.'s biggest newspaper.

Environmentalists and some journalists trace the *Sun*'s problems to late 1990, when a consortium of B.C. logging companies hired the New York-based p.r. firm Burson-Marsteller to buff the industry's image and expunge the "Brazil of the North" label that critics had applied to Canada. Burson-Marsteller, a worldwide specialist in corporate image makeovers, quickly set up a "Forest Alliance" with a start-up budget of \$1 million from the companies.

With the goal of "build[ing] public confidence in the industry's actions," the Forest Alliance began issuing press releases, producing half-hour television infomercials, and demanding better treatment from news outlets. The effort seems to have worked. Before the alliance got started, 73 percent of British Columbians singled out the forest industry as deserving closer governmental scrutiny, according to a 1990 poll by a major Canadian polling

As environmentalists see it, the *Sun* has sided with the logging industry.

Hume says he was called into his editor's office and grilled for more than an hour by a logging company official and an industry consultant about columns he had written examining the origins of a pro-logging coalition. *Sun* managing editor Scott Honeyman, Hume says, stood by in silence.

Prior to the birth of the Forest Alliance, the *Sun* had five full-time reporters covering forestry, fisheries, native affairs, energy and mines, and the environment. Today only the environment beat remains. The rest were lumped into a category called "resources" and handed over to the business section.

Reporters who wrote critically about the forest industry's impact on the environment, fisheries, or tribal land claims — and those who probed the workings of the Forest Alliance and Burson-Marsteller itself — say they were sub-

SOUND BITE

"It has long been recognized that the power of the press can be used for good or ill; rarely is it noted that the power itself depends on people's willingness to attend to current issues, take responsibility for public things, and recognize the importance of what they hold in common. Even the most brilliant spotlight can be ignored if what it illuminates is no longer regarded as public property."

Davis S. Merritt, Jr., and Jay Rosen in a paper written for the newly formed Project on Public Life and the Press, operated by the Kettering Foundation. Rosen is the project's director; Merritt is editor of *The Wichita Eagle*.

jected to pressure. The *Sun's* forestry reporter, Ben Parfitt, quit after Honeyman pulled him off his beat because, on a free-lance basis, he had written about Burson-Marsteller and the Forest Alliance for a Vancouver weekly. "He was declaring himself not a dispassionate reporter" with the article, Honeyman says. The paper's former native affairs reporter, Terry Glavin, who says the newsroom became "a bloody war zone" for reporters who wrote critically about the logging industry, also quit this year.

Meanwhile, in 1991, two months after the forming of the Forest Alliance, when the *Sun's* business side decided it needed its own outside p.r. firm to promote its shift to morning publication, it turned to a company the paper was familiar with — Burson-Marsteller. That job was finished by the end of the year.

This May more than 700 people turned out for a Vancouver conference titled "Take Back the News: Media, the Environment, and the Public's Right to Know," presented by Simon Fraser University. At the conference, Honeyman

defended the *Sun's* performance, blamed the recession for the loss of the environment-related beats, and denied that the *Sun's* hiring of Burson-Marsteller had had any impact on editorial decisions.

Kim Goldberg

Goldberg is a free-lance writer based in Nanaimo, B.C.

FOLLOW-UP

PHONY PHOTOS

In its October 11 edition, *Time* magazine conceded that the pictures of two alleged Moscow child prostitutes printed in its June 21 "Sex for Sale" story were staged.

As Wendy Sloane reported in the September/October *CJR*, *Time* had criticized Reuters photo editor Richard Ellis, who, via a journalists' computer

bulletin board, had called the pictures "a set-up, faked by the photographer." *Time's* implicit admission that Ellis was right comes after the man who took the photos, Alexey Ostrovskiy, told *The Washington Post* that he paid for the photos to be staged, that several of them did not show what their captions claimed, and that he can't be certain the boys in the photos are prostitutes.

The admission also comes after a Moscow police investigation, done at the urging of Parliament after *Time's* story appeared, determined that the story is a "fake" and that neither boy is a prostitute.

After *Time* complained to Reuters about Ellis's public criticisms, Ellis was recalled from the Moscow bureau. He subsequently resigned from Reuters. "All I know is that Ellis was told by the company that he should not have conducted himself or made comments publicly in the way he did," Reuters spokesman Robert Crooke says. "I don't think we have anything more to say than that."

Ken Davidoff

Davidoff is an intern at *CJR*.

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CAPITAL LETTER

I RIVIAL PURSUIT

BY CHRISTOPHER HANSON

Nothing is going to happen, but, wow, is it going to be something. Nothing is happening now and it sure is interesting. It is also highly significant. And, by the way, when our protagonist is doing nothing, he does it very poorly. This points to substantive shortcomings in the man.

The preceding paragraph pretty well sums up the news reports of mid-to-late August on Bill Clinton's Martha's Vineyard vacation, ten days in which the accompanying reporters (glued to the president by force of editorial habit, lacking the independence or good sense to take vacations of their own) filed stories like mad.

Their productivity was no small feat, for there was no substantive news, and relatively little to be gleaned even about Clinton's trivial pursuits. When he left for occasional jogs, golf games, and parties, the press pool would try to pursue him in a chase car, but often in vain. ("We ended up at the summer pad of Post Company Chairwoman Graham, but we never saw the place or the president.... We were sent to the darkened tennis courts to wait." — Pool report, August 20). Generally, the pool stood by at the end of a dirt road, waiting. *The Washington Post's* Ruth Marcus led off one pool report: "Picking up the existential theme of the last... report — the pointlessness of it all — your pool can dutifully report this: Nothing happened by 3 P.M. No jog. No golf. No sighting."

Christopher Hanson is Washington correspondent for the Seattle Post-Intelligencer and a contributing editor to CJR. Research assistance was provided by interns Ken Davidoff and Jill Priluck.



Finding meaning and value in a world of pointlessness is indeed one of the big challenges facing modern man. Luckily, few outside the clergy are better equipped to meet the existential challenge than are news reporters, who have unique assets when it comes to justifying their existence (and expense accounts).

To begin with, there is a journalistic law of supply and demand that works in their favor: when events and facts of substance disappear, events and facts that are lacking in substance automatically become more valuable and meaningful; when the amount of even nonsubstantive information diminishes, then *anything* about the news subjects becomes more valuable and meaningful and hence worth reporting — from what the Clintons ate to what books they bought. Thus, NBC correspondent Pete Williams held forth on the book titles on a CNBC discussion with Mary Matalin and Jane Wallace. And the president's remark after hitting a golf ball — "Whoa, mama, stay up!" — was reported so prominently that it may end up in *Bartlett's Familiar*

Quotations. The quote ran in *The Washington Post* on August 23, *The New York Times* on August 24, *The Washington Post* again on August 26. *The Boston Globe* and *The Hartford Courant* were late with the story on August 28. (*USA Today* was early, but its August 23 account had Clinton yelling only, "Whoa, mama!" — raising doubts about whether he wanted the ball to stop or keep going.)

With facts so much in demand, the reporters assigned to the Clinton pool had an especially heavy burden when they were actually within view of the president. They carried it dutifully. In a pool report filed August 21, for instance, the pool correspondent informed colleagues: "Clinton apparently was bitten by a mosquito on his right temple while playing golf."

The trappings and structure of news presentation make it relatively easy to project trivial events as something more. Media outlets dressed up the vacation in all the editorial accoutrements of a summit meeting or political convention — advance stories, daily updates, news analyses, even "character" reporting.

First came the curtain raisers, touting what was in store, however vaguely understood that was. *The Boston Globe* ran an advance story on August 19 filled with speculation about the itinerary and striking a note of mystery: "[N]either islanders nor White House staffers could say with certainty yesterday what the Clintons will do or where they will go." *USA Today* promised readers it was to be a populist vacation among "the people...amid the hundreds of tourists spilling from ferry boats." CBS forecast an elitist retreat among the glitterati. The network borrowed a leaf from German filmmaker Leni Riefenstahl, taking to the clouds in a kind of Triumph of the Bill: it broadcast panoramic aerial footage of the isle, including Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis's estate and a car in the driveway. Correspondent Eric Engberg speculated that the car might mean someone was at home, "perhaps preparing for the much-rumored possible Onassis-Clinton meeting."

Then came the big spot stories. These used slick writing to cover gaps in content. On August 25, the *Los Angeles*

Times led off: "Listen carefully: the silence you hear from this Atlantic island is the sound of the president of the United States at play." We then got the sounds of silence for another 1,138 words. (A president who shouts at his golf balls is not exactly silent, but this, presumably, was an occasion for poetic license.) A yacht outing with the Kennedys drew protracted, color-packed, at times breathless accounts ("It was a scene fit for *Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous*. Jackie O and the Prez! On a yacht! At Martha's Vineyard!" — *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, August 25), despite lack of access. The pool boat was kept "at least a mile away at all times and [we] could see nothing," according to an August 24 pool report. Three Coast Guard vessels enforced the news embargo.

Then came the news analysis. There was no news to analyze, of course, but these pieces were nonetheless *packaged* as food for thought, employing scholars and think-tankers to give weight to various observations, some blazingly obvious, others half-baked. On the August 24 *CBS Evening News*, correspondent

Engberg argued that vacations are important because presidents need to relax like anyone else. He trotted out talking head Laurence Radway (billed as a presidential scholar) to back this controversial thesis. Radway said: "... It's good to see him — I'm — I'm — I rejoice to see him relax here." Enlightenment at last. The *New Orleans Times-Picayune* (August 24) also tackled the question of why Clinton's vacation was important. It cited a professor to argue that, when a president takes a break, it can become tricky, as when a crisis breaks out: Should the president remain on vacation, conveying the impression of being out of touch or should he rush back to Washington, perhaps magnifying the crisis? Of course, there was *no crisis* during Clinton's vacation, but why pick nits?

Perhaps the most virulent cliché of presidential vacation news analysis was restated by the *Los Angeles Times* on August 25: "[H]ow he chooses to relax can tell us much about the man." The news media made much of this one. In mid-August, before Clinton had hit the



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Vineyard, when he made rest stops in Vail, Colorado, and Fayetteville, Arkansas, the word was that he did not know how to relax. He was "vacation-impaired," as *The Washington Post's* Marcus put it. *USA Today* reported on August 17: "The betting is Clinton may cut out before August 29, when he's expected to return to the White House." (Read literally, this sentence says Clinton is not expected to return when he is expected to return.) Then, during the Vineyard stay, reporters reversed field, judging Clinton to be fully capable of repose. CBS's Engberg chided: "He's so intent on relaxation he's barely mingled with everyday voters..." (August 24).

The public was also served a menu of "character" reporting — pieces strongly implying that the way Clinton vacationed, of all things, revealed flaws in the man and his record. One technique was to latch on to some facet of the vacation and use it as symbol of a past blunder or Clinton vulnerability. There were snide references to how he was staying at the home of Robert McNamara, who orchestrated the

In some reporting there appears to be a snobbish presumption that Clinton has risen, Jed Clampett-like, above his station

Vietnam War that "Mr. Clinton would later work so hard to avoid" (*New York Times*, August 26). If Clinton had not chosen that particular house, *The Boston Globe* reported, "an author of psychological novels would have had to invent it." What psychological insights the choice of house is supposed to have revealed were left unexplained. *The Washington Post* revealed on August 26 that Clinton "keeps a good deal more than the regulation fourteen clubs in his [golf] bag.... Some might say it's the perfect Clinton

metaphor — why choose among clubs if you don't have to? Why not NAFTA and health care and reinventing government?"

I'm a little surprised reporters missed the opening to go even further: "There were flowers near the fairway, a reminder of Gennifer Flowers.... The sun rose in the east, from the general direction of Russia, where Clinton once paid a controversial visit...."

Clinton's personal vacation style also came in for harsh scrutiny. *The Washington Post's* Marcus wrote on August 26: "Everygolfer is a middle-aged, thick-middled man outfitted in the manner that golfers inexplicably favor — shirts that accentuate the chunkiness of prosperity and preppy pastel pants cut large, with the belt hanging a little below the paunch. Today he is wearing an all-lavender get-up so doofy-looking, so White Guy, that you just know Chelsea took one disgusted teenage glance and rolled her eyes, 'Oh, Daddy, you're not wearing that.'" In just two sentences, I count four put-downs of his girth, five of his taste.

This was nothing compared to a



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vicious August 22 editorial in *The New York Times*, "Clinton Among the Swells":

Fact is, the man from L'il Abner's home state is headed smack into the belly of the beast he pledged to control: the Washington establishment.... Comes now what could be a psychic message from Mr. Bush's successor, which is that Mr. Clinton may be just as mystified as some of his constituents are as to who he is.... [H]is quest for summertime digs has been a study in uncertainty.... [T]his year the Clintons high-tailed it to Benton County, Arkansas, headquarters of the Walmart empire and home to maybe thirty other millionaires. Then, after what seemed a ritual visit, Populist Bill pulls up stakes

and heads for the most elitist haunt this side of Vail, Colorado.... There is, of course, the town called Hope. But Hope is not really a summer place and it's also a tad remote from the things that keep Mr. Clinton humming.

The editorial is a good example of how Clinton has faced a much rougher ride from the news media than certain predecessors. Consider another *Times* editorial about a self-styled populist, who vacationed at his multimillion-dollar ranch: "Ronald Reagan is taking a month off, and he's not calling his vacation by any other name. As one of his aides says, 'We make no apologies about it.' Nor should they. There is

nothing wrong with goofing off for a while.... Nothing at all. Thank you, Mr. President, for the reminder" (August 10, 1981). On President Bush's first summer vacation, the treatment was generally affectionate, even from the often cutting Maureen Dowd. And the reporting on John F. Kennedy at the Cape in 1961 often read like White House propaganda. ("UNCLE JACK' KENNEDY LEADS CANDY TREKS... [A] lithe, familiar-looking man of forty-four... leads a little band of youngsters to the Hyannis Port News Shop for their daily ration of sweets.... The man is John F. Kennedy, who tries to lay aside the presidential burden on summer weekends and live like any other daddy or Uncle Jack..." — *New York Times*, August 14, 1961).

Many factors contributed to the harsher treatment of Clinton. He had a far rougher relationship with the press during his campaign than did the other three men, and mutual hostility lingers. His poll ratings have been lower than the other three presidents in their first year in office, and that makes him a more tempting target. Beyond that, there appears to be a snobbish presumption in some of the reporting that Clinton has risen, almost Jed Clampett-like, above his station. Jody Powell, the former Carter White House spokesman, is among those who see a disdain for white southerners in some of the coverage. He's right, judging by the language that slips out: "...so White Guy...Clinton's game is Bubba golf...L'il Abner." As Powell points out, equally condescending comments about a political leader from a minority group would have got the perpetrators into big trouble.

To look on the bright side, at least one good vacation piece emerged from the summer frenzy. On the August 23 *CBS Evening News*, Connie Chung reported: "President Clinton is off the radar screen again today, continuing his vacation on Martha's Vineyard. According to a White House spokesman, the president's schedule today consisted mainly of, quote, 'vegging out.'" End of story. With the holiday season approaching, one can hope that Chung's account will serve as a model for coverage of the White House Christmas break. ♦

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DARTS AND LAURELS

◆ **DART** to WJW-TV, Cleveland, and anchors Denise Dufala and Martin Savidge, for not caring enough to send the very best news. At the close of each night's eleven o'clock newscast, one of the anchors salutes a member of the community by wishing the honoree a "Happy Birthday... from American Greetings and all your friends at TV-8. Along with a beautiful rose," the anchor gushes on as the camera pans to a brilliantly crimson specimen of the American Beauty variety, "you'll also be receiving an American Greetings card to celebrate the day." This repeated mention of the Cleveland-based company is reinforced twice more with loving shots of American Greetings' name on the back of the envelope and of the signature on the card ("American Greetings and WJW — TV-8").

◆ **DART** to WKRC-TV, Cincinnati, for a case of temporary professional insanity. Having been courteously granted permission to store some cameras in the back of several Hamilton County Common Pleas courtrooms in readiness for televising future trials, WKRC proceeded to equip the cameras with hidden devices that secretly captured courtroom activity in pictures and sound. The WKRC investigation — conducted in violation of federal wiretapping laws, of the civil rights of witnesses and jurors, and of constitutional rights to privacy — was aimed at a ratings-week exposé of the less than zealous work habits of courtroom personnel (as *The Cincinnati Enquirer* later sniffed in disgust, "Some scoop"). Eventually — after a curious judge spotted one of the bugs, after the FBI turned the case over to local authorities, after the county judges decided not to press charges, and after one reporter was fired, two news executives were suspended without pay, and the station manager delivered an on-air apology — the case was closed.

◆ **DART** to *The Atlanta Constitution*, for following its stylebook so slavishly that it failed to read between the lines. When the paper picked up from *The Washington Post* a bylined report by Kevin Sullivan about the arrest of two men charged with the murder of basketball superstar Michael Jordan's father, it also picked up the accompanying photos, which clearly showed that one of the defendants — "Daniel Green," as he was identified in the caption — was black, and that the other defendant — "Larry Demery" — was not. Equal treatment in the captions,

however, wasn't echoed in the *Constitution's* report, in which Larry Demery was referred to as "Mr. Demery" while Daniel Green became just "Green"; in nine separate instances in the page-one story, the *Post's* original references to "Demery and Green" were changed by *Constitution* copy editors to "Green and Mr. Demery." Responding the next day to what the paper characterized as a how-come question mildly posed by "several readers," the *Constitution* explained that it was the paper's policy to withhold the honorific from those convicted of felony crimes, as Daniel Green had been. Nevertheless, those "several readers" had obviously opened the paper's eyes: future stories on the case would refer to both men by their last names, the editors promised, and the general policy on bestowing titles would be reviewed.

◆ **LAUREL** to the New York City weekly *Village Voice* and reporters Wayne Barrett and Kristen King, for showing that the meter hadn't yet run out on a 1980s scandal. Recalling earlier revelations of bribery and corruption in the Parking Violations Bureau — revelations that had helped defeat Mayor Edward Koch and install David Dinkins in City Hall — Barrett and King ticked off the minute details of a dubious 1993 deal involving efforts to privatize the agency. Among the *Voice's* disclosures: that the outside company that had been awarded a \$200 million contract to manage the collections and other functions of the PVB was in fact the same company involved in the 1980s scandal, now operating under a different name; and that Dinkins administration officials, for reasons ranging from naiveté and sloppiness to apparent conflict of interest and possible malfeasance, had, by giving preferential treatment to the company in the selection process, eased its way back into the lucrative fast lane. On the tail of the *Voice's* disclosures came a Department of Investigations report, cancellation of the contract, the departure of at least one senior Dinkins aide, and a ban against doing city business with the company for the next five years.

◆ **DART** to all journalistic larcenists, petty and grand, who break the Eighth Commandment. Among the alleged perpetrators entered on CJR's overflowing blotter: the Bridgeport, Connecticut, *Post*, and business editor Tom Caruso, whose bylined August 31 report on the sale of goods and services through interactive computers housed

in kiosks was transcribed verbatim from a bylined AP story by Evan Ramstad (with four localizing sentences dropped in); the Cleveland *Plain Dealer* and reporter Keith C. Epstein, whose "Deadly Delays," an impressive series that appeared in the wake of two air crashes involving Cleveland-bound planes, was clearly indebted to "A Fatal Stall," a ground-breaking report on the first of the crashes by *Newsday's* award-winning staff writer Glenn Kessler; CNN's Larry King, who this winter declared that the story on the possible link between cellular phones and cancer "first broke on CNN's *Moneyline*," thus ignoring the fact that the news had been released six weeks before by the Virginia Cooperative Extension at Virginia Tech (replied a CNN representative to a Virginia Tech complaint, "Well, we broke it on the broadcast medium"); and *The Seattle Times* and columnist John Hinterberger, whose 1992 feature on the junk-food cravings of local chefs consisted of ingredients that were much the same as those contained in John Marshall's feature for *The Seattle Post-Intelligencer* in 1986.

◆ **LAUREL** to *The Boston Globe*, for lingering in the State House lobby. In a five-part series (beginning May 23), the paper's Spotlight Team exposed the inner workings of a Massachusetts legislature insiders' club in which lobbyists and lawmakers give and get. Based on a ten-month investigation that included a computerized study of all donations of more than \$50 to 186 incumbents and 54 newcomers elected to the 1991-92 legislature, matched to the jobs of 41,286 donors identified through corporate records, news clips, and street lists, "Beacon Hill's Money Game" exhaustively documented a "climate of corruption" — secret junkets, secret payoffs, secret fundings, secret deals — in which special interest and public interest became easily confused. The series prompted a grand jury investigation, currently under way.

◆ **DART** to the York, Pennsylvania, *Dispatch*, for expanding the definition of "vanity press." Its Sunday, June 27 edition carried a full-front Style feature on local women who had made it in a male-dominated working world — including one Nancy Conway, editor and publisher of the *Dispatch*. Surprisingly for a piece headed BREAKING THE GLASS CEILING, most of the ten women interviewed waved away gender as an issue in their climb to the top ("Maybe I was too dumb to notice," said one. "It doesn't seem to me that I've had to break through anything," said another. "I wouldn't say I've broken a glass ceiling," said a third, "since the term connotes to me...going through some distinct discrimination"). Conway, however, took the opportunity to weigh in with a complaint that in previous jobs at six other news organizations she had been denied promotions and raises because she was a woman. Not surprisingly, Conway's observations got more space than those of anybody else.

◆ **DART** to WXIA-TV, Atlanta, and reporter Dean Phillips, for going Hollywood. In the course of covering the trial of a man charged with murder-for-hire, Phillips signed a deal to make a movie about the case with a California production company whose payment scale was tied to the dramatic impact of the case (top dollar going to a scenario that would warrant a six-hour miniseries). Phillips's reportage included the airing of a three-part interview with a witness who claimed to have been present at a parking-lot meeting between the slain woman's husband and the alleged assassin — but it did not include the fact that the witness had failed a lie detector test and that his account had been discredited by police. Upon being subpoenaed by the defendant's outraged attorney, Phillips testified under oath in court about the deal, which, he said, had been approved by his bosses at WXIA. (One week after his court appearance — and after publication of a piece in *The Atlanta Constitution* exploring the ethical issues raised by the journalist's actions — WXIA announced on the air that Phillips had been fired.)

◆ **DART** to WCYB-TV, Bristol, Tennessee, for getting too close to the story. In an effort to pick up public support in its fight for fees from cable companies that carry its signal, the station this fall first organized a rally at a local mall — where, beside free hot dogs, the main attraction was its autograph-signing, picture-posing news staff — then reported on the rally as news. (Note to readers: this item is based on reports from viewers, newspaper accounts, and editorials, rather than on firsthand viewing of the broadcast, as is our normal practice. Station manager Joe Macione and news director Steve Hawkins refused to provide CJR with a transcript or tape.)

◆ **DART** to the Jefferson City, Missouri, *News-Tribune*, and reporter Tom Loeffler, for under-par journalism. In the course of a June 10 bylined story about an upcoming celebrity tournament sponsored by the ProAthletes Golf League, Loeffler swung straight into the rough: six self-stroking paragraphs about a hole in one that had highlighted the PAGL's Media Day tournament promoting the event. Included were the names of three witnesses to the triumph, a description of the iron used, details about the wind conditions that had prevailed, and a sportingly modest quote from the ace himself — reporter Tom Loeffler. (Loeffler's performance was almost matched by the Knoxville *News-Sentinel's* food editor, Louise Durman, who, in a bylined September 8 feature about a paper-sponsored cooking school, reported that "*News Sentinel* food editor Louise Durman will be at the cooking school to sell and autograph copies of her cookbook, *Recipes Upon Request*.")

This column is compiled and written by Gloria Cooper, CJR's managing editor, to whom nominations should be addressed.

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The 1993-94 Knight Science
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TV Producer
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Abe Dane
Science and Technology Editor
Popular Mechanics, New York

Geoffrey Burchfield
Science Reporter
Australian Broadcasting
Corporation

back:

Elizabeth Corcoran
Free-lance Technology Reporter
New York

Sherry J. Lassiter
Science Television Producer
Chedd-Angier Production Co.
Watertown, Massachusetts

David Stipp
Reporter
Wall Street Journal, Boston

Gregory A. Mock
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Santa Cruz, California

Linda Lowe
Program Administrator

David Ansley
Acting Director

Christine Mlot
Free-lance Science Writer and Editor
Milwaukee

Etsuko Furukohri
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Future Tense

The Anxious Journey of a Technophobe by Katherine Fulton

"Once a new technology rolls over you, if you're not part of the steamroller, you're part of the road."—Stewart Brand, author of *The Media Lab: Inventing the Future at MIT*

I can't pinpoint the moment my attitude about technology changed, because there wasn't a single one. I never wore the label technophobe as a badge of pride, the way some writers do. I just felt mystified by machines, and sheepish about my ignorance.

I think it was the passion of the people creating the electronic future that eventually seduced me into learning more. A few years ago I had gone to a workshop on group dynamics and organizational change; it had been filled with corpo-

rate technology types from places like Microsoft. I learned a lot and found myself telling one of the organizers, a computer scientist who had worked in the space program, that I wished he would give the workshop for people in nonprofits, "people who are trying to change the world." He looked at me with a puzzled expression on his face and said, "But, Katherine, that's exactly what these computer people are doing."

You don't forget a moment like that, when you feel the sting of a blind spot revealed. But I was

too busy to do anything about it. Not to mention depressed. My feelings about technology and the future of newspaper journalism in those days ranged from denial to gloom and doom. And that had been on a good day. Finally last year, after fourteen years as a reporter and editor, I left my job, and was considering leaving journalism. But first I wanted to step back and take a long look around.

As I began a fellowship year at Harvard, it came suddenly to me that it was time to stop being so stupid about



Katherine Fulton helped found *The Independent*, an alternative weekly based in North Carolina's Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill area. She worked as its editor for nearly a decade before leaving last year for a Nieman fellowship at Harvard. She now teaches a course on media technology at Duke University.

The author
up from
"gloom and
doom"

It came to me suddenly that it was time to stop being stupid about machines

machines. Naturally, I found my way down the river to MIT, to the gleaming I.M. Pei-designed Media Lab. I wandered through its corridors as though in a foreign land, forcing myself to remember the reporter's most basic lesson: there's no such thing as a dumb question. But it didn't really help. I still felt dumb and lost in a place that seemed to represent everything I found impenetrable about computers.

Some months later, I went to hear one of the Media Lab's scientists, Walter Bender, who's working on electronic newspapers. I hoped he'd be able to translate for me, but I only understood about half of what he said. He'd brush off a question or a challenge with a simple dismissal. "That's a no-brainer," he'd say, usually just at the moment my brain was most taxed. Still, he captured my imagination.

To Bender, the key new technology is electronic mail, because it is interactive. The word "interactive" hadn't become a buzzword yet, and it took me a while to grasp what he was talking about — that the one-to-one, two-way personal communication of the telephone will merge with the one-to-many, one-way mass communication of the newspaper or the television network. Bender wants news knit into the fabric of people's lives. The newspaper he envisions is a computerized assistant that can, for example, read your calendar, then provide you with articles and ads about the place you're going this weekend. And much, much more.

It's a disturbing vision, because it conjures up a nation of people so "personalized" that we don't even have today's headlines in common. I pushed myself beyond an easy, high-minded dismissal to take a closer look.

Bender throws off little phrases that have years of thought behind them. He says, for instance, that he wants the television to have "content knobs, not channel knobs." Again, it took me a while to understand what this means. Think of it like this: reading today's newspaper or watching today's news broadcast is like riding a passenger train. The news of the future will be like driving a car. It will be a service designed to appeal to the tastes and judgments of the user.

What if you could control the content, Bender asks, by talking back to a documentary film that engages you? Suppose, having watched for an hour, you could instruct the great computer in the sky to scan the ninety-nine hours of interviews that didn't make it into the film, and show the profile subject answering the questions the documentary left unanswered for you?

That's exactly what you'll be able to do in the world to come, Bender says.

I still had some doubts. But I was engaged, excited even, by aspects of this vision.

I found myself thinking back to the gulf war, to the massive amounts of daily coverage that illuminated very little. I had wanted to read the most revealing and insightful stories each day, and I couldn't have cared less what newspaper or country they came from. I had wanted a major U.S. newspaper to do the unthinkable: to provide me with an edited news summary from all sorts of sources, not just its own. I had wanted the kind of service Bender described, not a traditional news product.

A new medium

My encounters with Bender, as it turned out, were the first tentative steps on what slowly became a lively intellectual and emotional journey. I had caught a glimpse of what might be ahead. But I was still searching for other views of the horizon.

I found one in the Miami airport, of all places, when I spotted a *Rolling Stone* article by media writer Jon Katz touting computer bulletin boards as "the purest journalistic medium since smoke signals."

I knew a little about bulletin boards, though I hadn't signed on to one yet. Here was just what I needed — a guide who didn't make me feel stupid, who was instead inviting me to take a look at a media world "up for grabs."

Modems, telephones, and computers have created a new two-way communications medium already used by millions of people worldwide, Katz explained. The many talk to the many, rather than the few to the many, and everybody talks back, creating more accountability for anyone who provides information.

It's a radically democratic vision — one I now wanted to explore, because it explained a lot about the motivation of the computer industry's visionaries, the ones driven to change the world.

I imagined that, ideally, the video equivalent of the existing bulletin boards would be neighborhood C-Spans, controlled by the block council, announcing the arrival of new neighbors, providing political alerts, organizing day care co-ops, generating conversation. Everybody would be a reporter, and episodes like the chance filming of the Rodney King beating would become commonplace. Facts and opinions would flow without intervention, and most definitely without the blessing of journalistic gatekeepers, who in this new world must surrender control and share power, "things that journalists are trained not to do."

So when do people need a "journalistic filter" and when does it get in the way? I was just starting to chew on such questions when another view of the new landscape opened up. My friend and fellow journalist Francis Pisani had organized an outing to the MIT laboratory that develops technological tools to teach the humanities. Francis was way ahead of me in exploring the new technology; he'd been taking a course on how writing can evolve once the writer sees that the computer is much more than a fancy typewriter.

Come down to MIT, Francis said. If you want a look at the media future, you should have a look at education, because the applications, as they call them, are more advanced than they are in journalism. So I went, and soon found myself sitting in a darkened classroom as an English professor began demonstrating his interactive, multimedia program.

The text of *Hamlet* flashes on the screen. Run across a word or an allusion you don't understand? *Point. Click.* The definition is before you. Want to know more? *Point. Click.* And off you go for a journey into Elizabethan England. You like that scene, and want to see it performed? *Point, click, choose Zeffirelli's Hamlet, or Olivier's Hamlet.* Presto. You're watching the scene you just read.

Honestly, I think my mouth fell open. This was serious, fun, and something quite new. I was experiencing the user-controlled future for the first time. But I was also glimpsing another new medium — the multimedia future that destroys the old boundaries between print and video.

I had read about multimedia, of course, but I had to encounter it before I could fully grasp its significance. In the developing digital world, the messages, distilled to a common mathematical language, can include words, pictures, sound — any medium, because they'll all be the same medium. We won't be just print journalists, or radio journalists, or television journalists. We may all be digital, multimedia journalists. And things will be possible that no one has yet imagined.

I could see the potential for the new medium to become an alloy that merged the best of print with the best of television. I could see how viewing television could be more active, and how reading could be more sensuous. I could see the fascinating challenge involved in combining the talents of writers, photographers, filmmakers, information designers, graphic artists, animators, and computer specialists. And I could see that this new medium, like television before it, could begin to have an impact before it was in widespread use.

The excitement of this vision, together with its frightening underside, was driven home to me a little later when I was gaping my way through a

beautiful book called *Understanding Hypermedia*. I got to the chapter called Applications, which comes as close as a book can come to illustrating how the technology can be used in schools, corporations, stores, museums, in entertainment and infotainment.

I flipped to the book's index. The word "journalism" was not to be found.

"The next wave"

Journalism... I remembered that. Has something to do with trained reporters, determined to find facts someone doesn't want them to have. Has a lot to do with hard work and good judgment. Doesn't have much to do with graphic interfaces, high-definition television, or my sexy new PowerBook.

What *would* happen to journalism, and to journalists who refuse to become infotainers? Just about the time I was starting to wonder, I listened to a tape of Roger Fidler speaking to the American Society of Newspaper Editors last spring. Fidler is directing the new Knight-Ridder Information Design Lab in Boulder, Colorado, and has just finished a book called *Mediamorphosis*.

For the time being, Fidler said, the future is not an either/or proposition — either paper or electronic delivery. The electronic world will develop in parallel for some time to come. Look for the process to quicken beginning in 1995, as the hardware becomes available. Like television, it will be an "elite medium" at first. Then the prices will drop.

You have to get the current complex electronic world out of your mind, he said, and imagine the computer as an affordable, portable, notebook-sized consumer appliance, as easy to use as a toaster. Other industries, such as entertainment, will drive the development of this technology, and journalism will just ride along.

When you load this computer of the future with Fidler's newspaper of the future, you'll see something like today's front page, only it will actually be a three-dimensional map for exploring layers of information. Liberated from the space constraints of paper, the newspaper in tablet form will offer the reader features not now available, and provide various levels of detail and depth about every story. No longer will a key background sidebar run only once; it can run every day. All you'll have to do is touch the story, or ask out loud, and the tablet will deliver a few paragraphs, or a few thousand words, complete with maps and comments from the writer.

This ability to navigate in the electronic world — for each writer to break a narrative

What if you could control the content by talking back to a documentary? asks Walter Bender of MIT's Media Lab

down into connected pieces, and each reader to devise a different path through the pieces — is called hypertext. It's what my friend Francis Pisani had been studying at MIT, and it truly is a major development in the history of writing. Reporters, it seems, will face as many new creative choices as their readers in the nonlinear world in the making.

Remember, too, Fidler said, all the things a multimedia and interactive world will offer. His newspaper will enable you to touch a photograph or ad, opening a window to a slice of video. And you can send as well as receive. Having read your paper, you can instruct your notebook computer to clip and file what you need, to send a copy of an article off to a friend or to dial up that

What to do with the feeling that it's all too overwhelming? My strategy is to plod along patiently, playing tortoise to the technological hare. It's just like building a ball of string on a big story you plan to do someday. You don't have time to focus on it, but you can work on it a few hours here and

there, until before long you actually know a fair amount.

Here's a doable technological training program for tortoises and other breeds of journalistic animal:

Put your feet up

For a quick and enjoyable introductory read, complete with gorgeous graphic design and a glossary of

technical terms, pick up *Understanding Hypermedia: From Multimedia to Virtual Reality* (Phaidon Press, 1993). The authors, London designers Bob Cotton and Richard Oliver, are thrilled "to be present at the birth of a new medium" they believe "will dominate mass culture in the twenty-first century."

Demystifying Media Technology: Readings from the Freedom Forum Center (Mayfield Publishing, 1993) is less fun but much more thorough, and it too includes a glossary. Order from the publisher at 800-433-1279, and be sure to ask for the computer disk being offered with the book, so the most up-to-date articles will be included.

By all means, though, also contact the Freedom Forum Media Studies Center (212-678-6600) at Columbia University, which produces publications and seminars and has a state-of-the-art technology lab. The fall 1991 issue of *Media Studies Journal*, still in print, has a number of interesting articles on "Media at the Millennium." Roger Fidler's *Mediamorphosis, or the Transformation of Newspapers into a New Medium*, is among them.

If you want to know the immediate outlook for everything from digital audio broadcasting to videophones, turn to *Communication Technology Update: 1993-1994*. It's edited by August E. Grant

and Kenton T. Wilkinson, published by Technology Futures (800-TEK-FUTR), and updated annually at the University of Texas at Austin.

For a deeper overview of the complex interplay between the forces of technology, economics, and audience psychology, dig into *The Future of the Mass Audience*, an impressive scholarly work, by W. Russell Neuman (Cambridge University Press, 1991).

The best way to keep up with the rapid changes is to read *The New York Times* every day and *Wired* magazine every month. I read the *Times* because it is easy to find and because it's doing an excellent job covering the digital age — in major features, in the business section, in the computer columns, and in the Monday special media page. *Wired* is the most accessible and affordable of the new magazines on digital technology. *Newsweek* dubbed it "a techie *Rolling Stone*." Order it at 800-SO-WIRED with a credit card.

Get paid to learn

If you're a working reporter, write about the new technology, no matter what your beat happens to be. You'll find schools, government agencies, businesses, libraries, and museums to write about — and you'll get to see what interactive multimedia is all about. There will also be plenty of political and moral issues to explore as the fiber-optic information highway gets built.

If you haven't done so already, badger your boss to train and equip you and everyone else in your newsroom to do computer-assisted reporting.

Investigative Reporters & Editors (314-882-2042) offers training at its periodic conferences around the country, and has just received a major grant from the Freedom Forum to expand its services in technology training.

Of course, you can also teach yourself. Order "Computer-Assisted Research: A Guide to Tapping Online Information," from the Poynter Institute for Media Studies. The thirty-two-page manual will be updated in early 1994 to include information about the growing global network, the Internet. The guide, which costs \$3, can be obtained by writing to Research Guide, Poynter

A JOURNALIST'S GUIDE TO SURVIVAL IN THE DIGITAL AGE

idiotic columnist.

Some things probably *won't* change, he predicted. You'll still want edited packages of the top stories, so you won't have to search for them yourself. You may continue to turn first to the sports scores or the stock listings, just as you do now — and some days that may be all you read. The difference will be that you can also have the

new personal news packages, with as much information as you might want about your most passionate interests.

And don't forget, Fidler said, that all this will come with benefits the defenders of print often overlook. Delivering news electronically will save enormous quantities of money, trees, and landfill space.

Institute for Media Studies, 801 Third Street South, St. Petersburg, Florida 33701.

One of the on-line commercial services, CompuServe (800-848-8990), has a lively journalism forum that includes a little library of conversations on the future of the media. Once on line, you can ask both journalists and computer junkies for help with your stories and technical problems. It isn't free, so insist that your newsroom have access.

Explore

Find the computer junkies in your area — join a users group, take a tour of the local on-line bulletin boards, find a new friend who will translate the technical gobbledygook and be your guide. This stuff isn't easy. Have someplace to turn when you get discouraged.

Whatever your specialty, get your head out of it and learn what the new technology will mean to someone else. Writers need to talk more to artists and photographers, and vice versa. Print people need to understand more about video. Start seeing the big picture, not just your own lens on it.

Pick one of the new technological experiments and follow it closely. The *San Jose Mercury News* and *Time* magazine are both on America Online. Times Mirror and Cox have chosen Prodigy. Time Warner and US West are planning an interactive cable television system in Orlando, Florida. Magazines like *Newsweek* are offering editions on compact disks. You won't have any trouble finding some action.

Finally, if you can afford it, or can find someone to pay your way, by all means go to one of the big conferences where lots of people gather to gape at what's new and gab about what's not. The annual Digital World conference, presented by Seybold (800-433-5200), focuses on issues and trends as well as exhibitions. The 1994 conference, to be held in late spring, will bring together people from entertainment, consumer electronics, publishing, and computing.

In short, make time to see the world through different eyes. — K.F.

At last, the landscape ahead began to come into focus for me. Here were all the pieces of the puzzle, assembled in a coherent fashion: the newspaper as a service delivering content, not a product forever wedded to paper. Control in the hands of the user. The power of multimedia to tell a story in different ways.

Far from debasing newspapers, the electronic world, as Fidler described it, was poised to improve them immeasurably, especially for a generation that will grow up on interactive multimedia. Fidler told the newspaper editors to take heart: "I believe that we have an opportunity to catch the next wave and be the predominant medium for communications."

But then Roger Fidler, representing one of the nation's most powerful media companies, *would* say that. He's being paid to figure out how Knight Ridder can protect its interests. What will happen to the journalists? Will reporters have to carry new point-and-shoot videocams everywhere? Will editors do nothing but create hypertext links from the ballooning on-line libraries? How much will a personal newspaper cost to produce, and who will be able to afford to buy it?

My questions kept coming, and keep coming nearly every day now. I remain concerned about what will be lost in the digital future. But I'm even more worried that journalists will lose this opportunity to question assumptions and be more creative — to recapture lost audiences and capture new ones for the stories the shopping channels won't sell.

It will take guts to face the uncertainties. It won't be easy to live with unkunks — the unknown unknowns I heard a Harvard professor describe as the inevitable products of any technological revolution. But we have no choice but to face them, because computers are driving a change far larger than computer-assisted reporting, or paint programs, or digital photography. The economic infrastructure of whole industries is going to change, and journalism along with it.

At this point, all I know for sure is how I've changed: the "next wave" doesn't scare me so much anymore. I'm actually looking forward to riding it. ♦

I'm worried that journalists will lose this chance to question assumptions and be more creative

Imagine editing in cyberspace. Imagine going out on assignment not just with a notebook, or a video camera, or a microphone and tape-recorder, but with a "multimedia correspondent's kit" filled with all of the above. Imagine coming back to negotiate not only with news and photo editors, but also with software developers, multimedia design consultants, and people who make compact disks.

For a small group of *Newsweek* staff members, this circus already occurs almost every day. The experiment began a year ago, when *Newsweek* took two of its reporters and turned them into a multimedia news team. One, Michael Rogers, a senior writer, had a background in a variety of media and had been managing the magazine's technology coverage. The other, Vernon Church, specialized in science and worked in radio and television. Together, they were to produce the nation's first multimedia treatments of national news on a regular subscription basis.

The publication would be called *Newsweek InterActive*, distributed quarterly on compact disk. After its first issue this spring, *Wired* magazine, the hip new voice of the digital age, called *Newsweek InterActive* "Big Media's most visible accomplishment to date."

Because of *Newsweek's* early start, a lot can be learned about the challenges and opportunities of the new media world by examining the *NWI* team's first months of work. In fact, over the course of the year, Rogers and Church gradually shed traditional identities of both reporter and editor. They've started creating entirely new roles, behaving more like film producers and directors.

Each works relatively alone — Rogers at his home in Oakland, California; Church in New York, in partnership with Peter McGrath, the venture's executive editor and the managing editor of *Newsweek International*.

Todd Oppenheimer, a former editor and reporter at The Independent, a North Carolina weekly, is now a free-lance writer based in San Francisco.

Their software developers are in Novato, California, and Golden, Colorado. Joint editing between them mostly happens, as Rogers puts it, "in cyberspace" — over the phone, over computer lines, on disks hurtling through express mail.

The team's one regularly scheduled meeting time, a two-hour conference call each Wednesday morning, is usually dominated by technical questions — and the annoyances each medium poses for the others. The editors don't understand why software developers have such trouble making a chart work, or why the CDs can't be shipped on the date they planned. The software developers, Church says, "don't understand journalistic screw-ups." Welcome to multimedia, the new cultural melting pot.

Rogers has a vision of tomorrow's journalist: the reporters (the ones equipped with the multimedia kits) will come to their editors and say, "Here are the still photos we need to shoot, here's the video we need, here's the audio to record, here are some new ways to illustrate this information, and here's my script." Editors will have to be equally adept. "It's definitely a new way of editing," Rogers said one day, after spending several weeks shooting video interviews, editing the transcripts, creating related charts and databanks, and choosing a "stream" of still photos and voice-overs. "You have to care about and have a sense of each medium." For instance: "What picture works with the sound of that voice?"

The *NWI* team clearly loves confronting these challenges. Whenever Rogers fields a skeptical question from

Newsweek's Voyage Through Cyberspace

by Todd
Oppenheimer

Bye-Bye Baseball?

Babe Ruth

George Herman (Babe) Ruth
(1895-1919) Outfield
Boston Red Sox (1914-19)

G	BA	HR	R
2,543	.342	714*	2,174*

Michael Rogers (standing) and Vernon Church check out segments of a June story on the business of baseball, featuring an interactive interview with sources (far right) and sidebars on such past greats as Babe Ruth

a multimedia doubter, he smiles with delight. At a multimedia conference called Digital World '93, Rogers was asked if it's realistic to expect the public to give up relaxing with the printed page and instead keyboard their way through some complex computerized box. "If you talk to teachers at elementary schools," Rogers replied, smiling, "they'll tell you that the first time they get a lot of kids to read is when they see something on a screen."

That seems to be what multimedia is all about — catching the restless and demanding attention of the next century's audience.

"This is the first generation that has

Exploring the Interactive Future



never watched television without a remote control," Rogers said. His point is that for those under twenty-five, channel surfing has become a drag. These are kids who grew up relaxing with Nintendo, with all its high-tech jinks, the way baby boomer children relaxed with a storybook or a sitcom. "Neither conventional print nor passive television is really attractive to them anymore," Rogers said. Instead, Rogers and a growing number of media leaders believe the new generation wants TV news that can be directed at will: spiced with personally designed charts and polls, varied with inventive graphics and related stories in print or radio, and

with advertisements you can choose or lose. In other words, they want something "interactive," the mantra of tomorrow's media age.

The multimedia frontier is now being explored by so many news organizations — a dozen national magazines, at least as many major metro dailies, a variety of television stations — that any count of the players becomes outdated within weeks. Just recently, *Newsweek's* primary competitor, *Time*, entered the fray with an entirely different approach.

Time's parent company, Time Warner, has been putting out news-oriented CDs somewhat like *Newsweek's*.

But the magazine itself decided to forgo multimedia's high-tech bells and whistles for now, investing instead in plain old text. But *Time* is sending it over the America Online computer bulletin board Sunday afternoon, a day before the printed magazine hits most newsstands. Bulletin board readers can immediately correspond with the writers and editors (that is, when the journalists have the time to write back). Eventually, *Time* hopes to add visual features, and hook newsmakers and sources into on-line chats as well. According to *Time* assistant managing editor Walter Isaacson, when *Time* made its on-line debut in early

September, 8,000 computer watchers "logged" on, breaking an America Online record.

What does multimedia mean? What's it like to work as a multimedia journalist? And how will the use of multimedia change the shape of the news business?

Today, multimedia generally begins with a CD-ROM, a little plastic circle that cannot be added to or easily copied. One CD packs a lot of information — enough to fill 500 to 600 floppy disks. To make each CD, *Newsweek* calls on some forty-five people — software developers, video crews, multimedia design and visual consultants, as well as a photographer and a writer. This team fills each disk with text from the past three months' *Newsweeks*, a selection of related *Washington Post* stories, four hours of audio interviews (culled from a radio program called "Newsweek On Air"), and two new multimedia stories, which are created especially for these CDs and account for up to 75 percent of the disk's material.

To create the multimedia stories, Rogers and Church start with printed texts, most of which are written by *Newsweek* staff reporters, in much the same style as if for the magazine. The editors then "scavenge" these stories, as Church puts it, looking for sections they can "chunk out" into various multimedia features: the photo essays, the fact lists they call databanks, as well as fancy charts, extended footnotes, simulations, maps, and various kinds of audio and video interviews. "We look for any point in the story where people might want to know more, in any medium," Rogers said.

The editors also look for new ways to present information. In its first "multimedia documentary," released last March and called "Mending the Earth," *NWI* tried out a flexible graph, which creates simulated scenarios about the future. Suppose we begin controlling pollution, but we lose ground in global food supplies. Would the human race survive? Click and you'll find out.

Church cautions that the simulations are limited and rather artificial at the moment. But their potential for analyzing public policy could keep a media techie awake all night.

For a June story about the business of baseball, the *NWI* team created a kind of interactive interview, which it called Face to Face. The feature begins with a handful of the sources Rogers and Church interviewed being pictured on the screen, each in separate boxes. The viewer is also shown the various questions that were asked. With a click of the mouse, the viewer picks the questions, and each source comes to life briefly, answering in video. Click elsewhere on some stories and you get a longer answer without the video (essentially a radio interview playing over a still photo of the speaker).

Each multimedia feature is linked to the main printed text through highlighted words — a feature called hypertext and the key to the print medium's current role in multimedia. On the baseball story, for instance, the word "salary" is underlined, alerting you that a chart is available on salary ranges. Click on "salary" and the chart pops up. Viewers can always explore the full range of features available by clicking on "library," browsing on the multimedia shelf, and clicking away.

In other words, *NWI* differs from a magazine or newspaper because of its numerous active features: audio, video, animations, mobile graphics. Yet it also differs from television and film in the depth and variety of information available, and in the way it lets viewers interact with the entire package.

At this point, *NWI* is available on disks that can be played in two ways — on television (through a Sony player, called a Sony CD-XA); or on an IBM-compatible computer (equipped with a CD-ROM player, at least a 386-version processing chip, and a system capable of displaying SUGA graphics). MacIntosh versions aren't yet available, but *NWI* hopes they will be next year. Each disk costs about \$50, a yearly subscription of four costs \$130.

The material here does not create the complete, two-way information network envisioned when people talk of "interactive television." That scenario, which is not yet feasible, involves the opening

of the eagerly awaited "data highway" — that vast electronic world where everybody plays, no one's in control, and anyone can get any kind of news or entertainment anytime. In contrast, *NWI*'s viewers cannot go beyond the material they're given on each CD. Moreover, like any of today's multimedia CDs, the technical quality is inferior to standard television: transitions are slow, video images are jerky.

For this reason, people tend to think multimedia material won't be worth looking at for some time to come. Journalists have extra reason to shake their heads. No matter how good CDs get, their manufacture and distribution is time-consuming, rendering them impractical for live news. What the news business really needs is the full data highway, where multimedia material will be delivered live over the phone wires, TV cables, satellite air waves, or through some combination thereof. But Rogers and others believe that even when that day arrives, the people setting the standards in this new industry will be the CD pioneers. "This is where you learn," Rogers told his Digital World '93 audience as he ran *NWI* disks, after a few false starts, through both a computer and a TV. "Some of our competitors decided to wait for interactive TV. We strongly encouraged them to do that."

Currently, *NWI* estimates that about 4 million people own CD-ROM players, a figure Church expects to more than double by 1995. So far, these people have very little nonfiction material to play with, which makes *NWI* hope for a market. *NWI* is now producing about 20,000 disks per issue. That won't make anyone rich for a while. But Rick Smith, *Newsweek*'s editor-in-chief and president, doesn't mind. "If you look at the expenses versus the revenue to date," he says, "it's clearly an investment on our part. But if you factor in what we've learned about playing in the digital field, it is a clear net plus."

Rogers calls the learning experience "iterative" — a computer term that means one cannot know step two until step one is finished; step two spawns

step three, and on and on toward madness. "No one medium is dominant," Rogers warns. "The script influences the photos, the photos influence the sidebars, and so on. Photo editors go nuts. We can't say, Here's the finished text — go get the pictures. We want to be able to bring a half-finished story to them and say, Where do we go from here?"

For its new CD, due out this November, the *NWI* team continued experimenting. First, it took on two multimedia stories, both about timely topics. One was on special effects in movies, pegged to this summer's blockbuster, *Jurassic Park*. The other was on the health care crisis, a domain whose challenge would be its dryness.

In the health care piece, *NWI* dealt with the experts' leaden manner by ignoring video interviews altogether. It began with a story already in the works, by *Newsweek's* veteran Washington writer Robert Samuelson. Church then asked Samuelson to write a version that would be heard as narration. For Samuelson, this meant a different writing style — dropping almost all the quotes, putting the story's numbers into charts and "databank" boxes — then undergoing an extra amount of editing.

Samuelson, who calls himself a Luddite and writes on an old Royal typewriter, likes *Newsweek's* electronic venture: "As a writer, I feel overjoyed we're finding new ways to use what we write." But, he adds, "this was so much like what I always do that it didn't give me any sense that I have to learn anything different. It was like brushing your teeth — with a new toothbrush. It's still brushing your teeth."

Perhaps. Perhaps not. Church had no criticisms of Samuelson's effort, but he said "a whole different skill is needed to write for the spoken word." Ultimately, the *NWI* team built the health care story around Samuelson's script, audio interviews with experts, and more than 100 photos — of health care in Canada and Japan, of American hospitals, and of a destitute family of ten children, whose mother now lies in a coma. The photos generally run with narration and printed captions. And they appear and disappear in a variety of ways — from right to left, from top to bottom, sometimes breaking into and out of a checkerboard pattern. "It creates a real sense of

Suddenly, the best journalists may be those who can expand a story imaginatively

motion," says Church, the lead editor on this story. "I remember thinking, Wow, I never knew photos could look like this!" The power of these photo essays has led Rogers to predict a renaissance in photojournalism.

At the moment, still photos have an extra edge over video, since CDs have difficulty with video footage. But Rogers believes that "no matter how good video gets, I bet we use more stills. With video, whenever you freeze one frame, it almost always sucks." In a series of still photos, "each image is a composed thought."

The other November story — the piece on special effects in movies — required gathering film clips, a key facet of multimedia productions. "We wanted to face the problem of going to Hollywood," Rogers explains, "and to experiment with entertainment clips and rights problems."

The story seemed perfect for multimedia. Sections of a CD can be replayed, like any videocassette; but a CD-ROM's segments, being computerized, can be found immediately, no matter where the viewer is in the material. All one need do is use the "hypertexted" cue word or turn to the "library" menu's offerings. For example, footage of *Death Becomes Her*, in which Meryl Streep's head revolves 180 degrees, can be played, with several clicks, in quick combination with still shots of the effect's technical preparation, interviews with the director, and shots of similar effects in other movies. "This seemed the best way to let someone understand how special effects are done, to really take it apart," Rogers said.

There's no anchor or host on *NWI* documentaries. "The viewer becomes the host. They're the ones asking the questions," Rogers said. When viewers are in control like this, writers must take

a back seat. "You give up the ability to direct a story," Rogers warned, "the personal statement."

Nonetheless, Rogers is having the time of his life. Working in interactive media, he said, "is such an overwhelming experience. It's so creative. At this point it's much closer to inventing than editing."

The work does have its frustrations. Technology hassles are almost constant; Rogers and Church estimate that, early on, electronic challenges consumed about 60 percent of their time. They've now got that down to about 30 percent, but Rogers expects technical challenges will never shrink much further.

Once the biggest technology obstacles are overcome, multimedia might well bring society at least three enlightening changes. First, tomorrow's media-savvy children — those impatient with today's books and one-dimensional "passive television" — might not get dumbed down after all. It has been said that a society's morality is directly related to its attention span. That's a frightening concept. But as multimedia productions develop, their creators will steadily invent new ways to attract children's attention, perhaps luring them into some thoughtful material.

Second, Rogers believes that the multimedia revolution may broaden the nature of journalistic judgment. Since space is not a significant constraint in the electronic world, multiple angles of a story can now be developed, each "chunked" into a variety of media forms. Suddenly, the best journalists may no longer be those who know how to limit a story's focus, but those who can expand it imaginatively.

Third, such limitless space could also reduce the prevalence of biased reporting. Every reporter who has unfairly slanted a story can recall how carefully some facts had to be excluded and the remainder laid out with great craftiness. In multimedia treatments, that control is gone — viewers are now in command. So, for example, if Rogers tried to inaccurately suggest there is little public support for a particular change in health care, a careful user of the interactive poll would catch him red-handed. "The seams will show," said Rogers, smiling once again. "Bias may be harder to pull off." ♦

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Application forms may be obtained
from Charles R. Eisendrath, Executive
Director, The Livingston Awards,
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Mike Wallace, correspondent, CBS News

News Agressivo

Aqui Agora and South America's
Passionate, Controversial New Journalism

by Jack Epstein



Throughout South America, as fledgling democracies struggle to govern in difficult economic times, an activist kind of journalism is increasingly filling the power vacuum. It is a passionate form of reporting that does not always follow American rules of objectivity.

■ In Bolivia, the TV show *The People's Court* sends camera crews to stalk men accused of beating their

Jack Epstein, based in Rio de Janeiro, has been a stringer in Latin America for ten years for a number of U.S. newspapers.

Sergio Frias relives the story in which he traded himself for a robber's infant hostage — then covered the negotiations

wives. It also investigates exploitation of Indians, a topic ignored in the past.

■ In Argentina, reporters have uncovered so many scandals involving government officials that the administration of President Carlos Menem has counterattacked, filing nearly 100 lawsuits against journalists (see "Argentina: a Fix on Corruption," *CJR*, May/June 1992).

■ In Venezuela, a reporter's exposé of corruption led to the resignation of President Carlos Andres Perez.

But nowhere is the trend more visible than in Brazil, where the press was unleashed after 1988, when a new constitution formally ended more than two decades of military rule.

Last December, an exposé by *Veja*, the nation's leading newsmagazine, played a key part in the downfall of President Fernando Collor de Mello.

At the Rio daily *O Povo Na Rua* (People On the Street), city editor

"Our goal is to break with the orthodox, pasteurized American style of television journalism that everyone in Brazil copies"

Antonio Carlos Cardoso sends reporters daily into slums, or *favelas*, to report on homicides — in hopes, he says, of forcing official investigations, which the police are slow to make without pressure. Critics of this new brand of journalism note that *O Povo* banners each front page with gruesome close-ups of victims — a practice Cardoso defends by saying that his newspaper is the only one that "shows how the poor live and die."

Each weeknight, meanwhile, television anchor Boris Casoy interrupts his narration of the news to turn to the camera and rail against government corruption and empty promises, lambasting policy makers as "shameful" and calling Brazil the "paradise of impunity." Casoy's trademark rage makes him a kind of tropical Howard Beale, the newscaster in the 1976 film *Network* famous for yelling "I'm mad as hell, and I'm not going to take it anymore."

In a recent Brazilian political cartoon, an adviser tells President Itamar Franco that, to regain his popularity, he must be "more agile, straightforward, and decisive."

"You're right," the president replies. "The first thing I'll do is exchange my entire cabinet for those reporters at *Aqui Agora*."

Brazilians understood. *Aqui Agora*, Portuguese for Here and Now, is the heavyweight champion of South America's new subjective and aggressive brand of journalism. For U.S. viewers to understand the show, it helps to imagine a Tom Brokaw who is perceived by the working class and by the poor as their advocate, capable of doing what public agencies and politicians can't. Imagine Brokaw arriving in south central Los Angeles and being met with chants — "NBC is here!" "Justice! Justice!" — as he listens to local residents' complaints about the police, government agencies, or shady business-

men. Finally, imagine him accompanying them to the offender's office or home for an on-camera confrontation. And, sometimes, getting results.

"*Aqui Agora*'s secret is it knows people's tastes, fears, wants, and ghosts," says a recent article in the French magazine *Actuel*. "It is populist, exaggerated, sanguinary, demagogic, theatrical, chaotic."

Critics of *Aqui Agora* call it Robin Hood's evil twin: "It exploits the poor to give to the poor. It's a circus," writes a columnist for the daily *Folha de São Paulo*. That was certainly true when the show debuted in 1991. Its network, SBT, a rival to the giant Globo network, was accused of sensationalizing the news for the sake of high television ratings by focusing on crime, violence, and gory car accidents.

Six months later the format changed. Crime stories are still featured, but reports on such issues as inflation, pollution, and the deterioration of schools are interwoven with segments on shantytown drug raids, prostitutes coerced by brothel owners to abort pregnancies, and transvestites being stalked by a serial killer. People like it. *Aqui Agora*'s popularity — the audience has grown to 25 million — recently spurred SBT to expand the show into two segments, scheduled before and after the network's prime-time evening news — thus competing with Globo's more traditional nightly news show, as well as with part of Globo's most popular prime-time soap opera.

"Our goal is to break with the orthodox, pasteurized, American style of television journalism that everyone in Brazil copies, for a format that is more alive and spontaneous," says Marcos Wilson, SBT's director of journalism. "We aim to show reality."

While that reality is often sensational, *Aqui Agora* also features serious muckraking with an innovative cinema verité style in which the journalist describes

the news as it unfolds. And, quite often, creates and shapes that news.

This spring, for example, an *Aqui Agora* reporter interviewed residents of a working-class neighborhood about their five-year battle against a polluting industrial laundry plant. During the segment, reporter Jacinto Figueira suddenly declares, "Let's go to the owner's house and get this thing settled." Next, viewers see a lively discussion between the owner, safe behind his iron gate, and some fifty irate residents. When the businessman agrees to clean up the problem in five months, several protesters are visibly upset. But Figueira counsels them: "You waited five years, you can wait five more months."

On camera, *Aqui Agora* reporters have berated São Paulo meter maids for writing up bogus parking tickets, persuaded a reluctant university director to meet with students protesting a hike in tuition fees, and negotiated between rifle-toting police and land squatters armed with pitchforks.

Aqui Agora has also brought something new to Brazilian television news: consumer affairs. Each evening, like a preacher in a Bible class, Celso Russomano cites one of the 119 articles in the 1991 code outlining Brazil's first consumer protection laws, then shows how unscrupulous merchants violate them. In recent weeks he has cajoled a bus company into paying for losing a passenger's luggage, talked a caterer into settling with clients who had paid for goods they had not received, and had a showdown with Brazil's minister of social security.

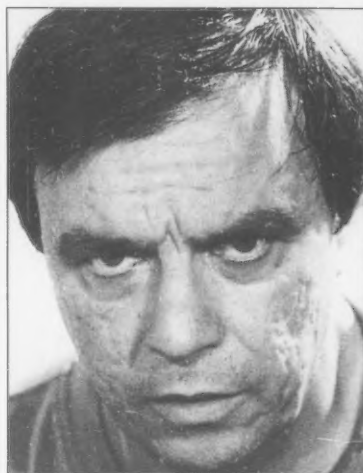
In the social security story, a would-be pensioner had made twenty-seven unsuccessful attempts to register at a São Paulo office before writing to *Aqui Agora*. Russomano accompanies him on the twenty-eighth visit. When the reporter is told that the only person qualified to help them has left the office, "This is shameful!" he declares.

"How many times does this man have to come here? Doesn't anyone tell the truth in this country?"

Russomano then attempts to interview the state social security director, who refuses to talk to him. "I would be ashamed to be the minister of social security," Russomano says in a standup shot. "You there in Brasília, you too will someday be a retiree." That was enough to get Russomano an interview with the minister, Antonio Britto, several weeks later in the nation's capital. Britto lays the blame on a dwindling budget but promises to register any name given to him by Russomano. "We'll wait and see what happens," the reporter tells his viewers, as the minister looks on.

Like his colleagues, Russomano goes way beyond U.S. journalistic standards when it comes to moral and legal judgments. In a country where law is based on the Napoleonic Code, in which the burden of proof is on the accused, *Aqui Agora* sometimes acts like a people's court. "Do you want to go to jail?" Russomano asked one hapless merchant in July. Crime reporter Celia Seraphim, accompanying police on a raid on a pornography theater that was illegally advertising its shows with public posters, castigated the theater owner's "aggression" against public morality and broadcast some customer's faces.

In July, *Aqui Agora* cameras taped for eleven minutes the plight of a sixteen-year-old São Paulo receptionist named Daniele Alves Lopes. While reporter Sergio Frias describes the scene, Alves sits calmly on the fourth-story ledge of a building, ignoring the pleas of a security guard to come down. When firemen attempt to rescue her, she jumps. "My God, my God, my God," Frias says, as the camera follows her flight through the air, all the way to the ground, veering away only at the last moment.



Celso Russomano (above) sometimes settles consumer issues on the air; Gil Gomes's beat is murder

That evening the suicide ran as the final segment and was, as usual for the last segment, promoted throughout the show, this time with a warning that adults shouldn't let their children watch. The next day a pollster noted that the young woman's death had added three points to *Aqui Agora's* ratings in the São Paulo area.

"Their spokesmen say it's freedom of information, that they are only presenting facts," wrote psychoanalyst Jurandir Freire Costa in the Rio daily *O Jornal Do Brasil*. "But the body of an unhappy girl lost in urban anonymity — is that the reality of a suicide? Or is it lucrative sensationalism?"

Accusations of yellow journalism are regularly aimed at crime reporter Gil Gomes. Each night Gomes tells another

story of a murder, usually committed in the slums of greater São Paulo. (Gomes rarely lacks material; in the first four months of this year, 1,741 murders were committed there.) Against eerie background music, he recites his script in a theatrical growl, tossing in editorial opinions such as "Like all cowards, he ambushed her" and "This monster deserves to spend the rest of his life in jail."

Gomes takes viewers to the scene of the crime, retraces the victim's steps, and interviews witnesses, distraught family members, police investigators, and, if they have been caught, the alleged killers. In at least one case he took along the mother of a murdered girl to the jail cell of her accused murderer.

In America, to be told you are too involved in a story is an insult. At *Aqui Agora*, it's a compliment. Last April, reporter Sergio Frias arrived at a São Paulo home to find unemployed laborer Juracyr Helio standing on a veranda, holding a gun to the head of a one-year-old hostage and surrounded by some sixty armed policemen. Helio, who had a long criminal record for homicide and rape, had sought refuge in the child's home after being shot three times in a botched robbery.

Frias soon coaxed the wounded man into a trade — himself, the reporter, for the baby. With a microphone in his hand and a gun being held to his head, Frias was hostage, negotiator, and reporter — all on the same story — until it ended quietly ninety minutes later.

Even Gil Gomes dropped his nightly murder story to cover the drama, which was *Aqui Agora's* main segment that evening. While Frias was answering reporters' questions after the standoff, Gomes followed the wounded gunman into an ambulance. There he began what would have been an exclusive interview, except that Helio passed out from loss of blood. ♦

The Very Model of the Reader-Driven Newsroom?

How *The Olympian* got to the pinnacle of Gannett's News 2000 pyramid

by Doug Underwood

For the bottom-line executives of the Gannett Company, the way *The Olympian* has embraced the chain's News 2000 program is a testament to the success of the company's campaign to turn around the fortunes of its eighty-three daily newspapers. Circulation growth at *The Olympian* — the 35,000-circulation monopoly newspaper in Washington's capital city — is healthy, despite a late-arriving recession that has slowed growth in the Olympia market. The readers who sit on the newspaper's numerous reader panels say good things about the newspaper, and a recent study indicates that reader satisfaction is up from low levels in 1990. Even some reporters who have grumbled about Gannett's News 2000 program — which calls for each of the chain's dailies to find out what readers in their communities want in their newspapers, and then give it to them — acknowledge that Olympians seem to like the changes.

"When [the News 2000 program] came through the door, I was as big a skeptic as anybody was," says Mike Oakland, a former legislative reporter recently appointed the newspaper's editorial page editor. "I saw it as another attempt by corporate to tell me how to do my job. But I'd call myself a convert. The bottom line is, I think this is a better newspaper because of News 2000. More importantly, I think our readers think it's a better newspaper."

Doug Underwood is a former reporter for The Seattle Times and the Gannett News Service who teaches journalism at the University of Washington in Seattle. He is the author of When MBAs Rule the Newsroom. The book, published this summer, grew out of an article by the same name that appeared in the March/April 1988 CJR.

But many of the newspaper's forty other newsroom staff members don't see it that way. For Gannett, *The Olympian* has become the epitome of the reader-driven newspaper — a concept that the company has embraced with special fervor through its News 2000 program. And staff members are chafing under the constraints of a micromanaged newsroom. "*The Olympian* is the poster child for News 2000," says one veteran *Olympian* reporter. "They've taken News 2000 to places where no reporter would want to go."

Since the program was unveiled two years ago, *The Olympian* has finished near the top in virtually all the assessments that Gannett makes to insure that its newspapers are working within the News 2000 pyramid — a formula designed to reconnect newspapers to their communities by involving readers in the entire news production process (see "News 2000: A Pre-Millennium Preview of Gannett's Big Changes," CJR, March/April). At *The Olympian*, this meant readers were asked to send in coupons about their preferences for news coverage; editors held nine public forums (some of which were sparsely attended); three reader panels were organized in which members of the community were asked for their views about the newspaper; and reporters were sent to shopping malls and other public places to conduct surveys of readers. All in all, about 700 survey forms, ranking issues of greatest community importance, were collected. This and other material served as the basis for *The Olympian*'s News 2000 plan, which was submitted to Gannett headquarters for approval (as were the plans from Gannett's eighty-two other newspapers). Since then, the plan has served as a blueprint for redesigning *The Olympian*'s

news pages, restructuring the newspaper's beat system, and instituting a system of editor oversight that insures that Gannett's concept of community-based news dominates the news columns.

The result, says Oakland, is a system that has broken staff members of routine habits, forced reporters to be in regular contact with readers, and made the newspaper more responsive to community interests. An example, he says, was the concern mentioned by a readers' panel about gangs and the newspaper's neglect of the topic. Oakland says that resulted in a monthly feature called Gang Watch. "Face it, you had to shake up the place," he says. "You had to essentially start from scratch."

For their part, many staff members — including ones who processed the reader coupons and attended the reader forums — say they aren't convinced that the newspaper's new format reflects community feeling. They note that, although old marketing research was examined for clues about reader preferences, Gannett spent no money on new scientific readership research during the News 2000 planning process. And they say that, for all the coupons and focus groups, editors seemed intent on implementing their own concepts of community news rather than the community's. For example, they say the readers they have talked to (both informally and as part of the News 2000 evaluation) consistently fault the newspaper for its lack of depth in news coverage — a lack they feel has only been exacerbated by the newspaper's implementation of a policy that severely restricts jumps and by its emphasis on brief stories, graphics, and news-you-can-use. Such practices, they say, are more a reflection of the formulas in vogue at places like *USA Today* than of the interests of *Olympian* readers. The editors "heard what they wanted to hear and ignored the rest of it," says one staff member. "I didn't hear one single person [who attended the reader forums] say anything about story jumps."

Journalists at *The Olympian* say that the new format makes it virtually impossible to deal adequately with a complex story. In a newspaper in which most stories run no longer than six to ten inches, "You just have to get into your piece and make your points — bam, bam, bam," says a reporter who has left the newspaper. "Journalism there just became more and more like clerical work."

There is irony in the fact that *The Olympian*'s News 2000 plan, with its emphasis on reflecting community interests, is being carried out by editors with little connection to the community. In the past ten years five top editors have come and gone, with a sixth arriving last year. In the past fourteen months alone *The Olympian* has had a new executive editor, managing editor, city editor, and night city editor, all from outside the newspaper and the community. And yet, under the formulas of News 2000, more and more ideas are generated in the meetings of these transient editors and fewer and fewer come from reporters, who

now have less time to go out into the community and follow leads and hunches.

This "meeting culture" requires that reporters coordinate their work with a design desk and keep editors briefed for each new round of meetings. Reporters are expected to write memos updating their story files in the computer as often as five times a day, with additional files geared toward what they are writing for tomorrow, for the weekend, for the following week, and long-term projects. The system, complains one reporter, is run by "journalistic technocrats" who have "bought the company line" and "just want to advance." This reporter adds, "We've become functionaries. It's an absolutely oppressive system run like the Keystone Kops."

In fact, the tight leash of the News 2000 program extends all the way through *The Olympian*'s editorial offices to Gannett corporate headquarters. Under the strict accountability system put in place with News 2000, editors are regularly assessed on how well they are following the News 2000 formula, their work being judged by a panel of Gannett editors and corporate officials according to a 100-point grading system. Editors, staff members say, are now under intense pressure to measure up well against their fellow editors in the chain. To do so, the editors have in turn made it clear that employees' job evaluations depend on how well they adapt to the system.

As part of its effort to target readers, *The Olympian*, like much of the rest of the newspaper industry, has knocked down the walls between the newsroom and the marketing and business departments. In the office of Vikki Porter, the newspaper's new executive editor, statistics on the sales of various front-page editions adorn the wall. A circulation person routinely sits in on news meetings. Six staff members from the newsroom sit on a committee with business department employees which, as part of Gannett's company-wide ADvance marketing workshop program, tries to come up with schemes designed to help sell more ads and increase revenue. Recently, a "Sunday Special Report" about more Washingtonians flying to Reno ran on the front page, accompanied by sidebars about things to do in Reno, airline flights and fares, and a telephone number for the Reno-Sparks Convention and Visitors Authority. While the stories apparently weren't linked to any specific promotion or advertising initiative by the newspaper, community growth reporter Lorraine Thompson, who was assigned to the ADvance committee, says she and others are "fairly uncomfortable" with the newsroom's participation in the ADvance program. "I'm not sure where it's leading," she adds.

Like other Gannett newspapers, *The Olympian* is also expected to implement various company-wide campaigns, the most notable of which is its "mainstreaming" program. As part of Gannett's effort to get more minority views into the news pages, reporters

"You had to shake up the place," says editorial page editor Mike Oakland. "You had to essentially start from scratch."

are told to "mainstream" their stories by including as many minority sources as possible, and to identify mainstreamed quotes at the top of stories so the quotes won't be cut out. They are also asked to produce regular tear sheets of their mainstreamed stories. These are then sent to Gannett headquarters, where a report is prepared comparing the performance of each Gannett newspaper. Reporters applaud the goal of the program, but say its rigid requirements mean that minority sources may end up in stories no matter how unqualified to comment they may be.

Editors at *The Olympian* acknowledge that reporters don't necessarily like the changes they've implemented. But they say that the focus is on what readers want in their newspaper, not what journalists think should be there. What matters to them, they add, is that the changes they've put in place receive positive feedback from readers — a claim backed up by members of those boards who clearly enjoy having their views regularly solicited by the newspaper.

Andy McMills, former executive editor of *The Olympian* and chief drafter of many of the newspaper's News 2000 changes, acknowledges that some of the newspaper's new practices — such as its anti-jump policy — are based on industry research rather than reader forum findings in Olympia. But McMills, now the executive editor at Gannett's newspaper in Springfield, Missouri, defends the newspaper's use of multiple "points of entry," break-out boxes, reader service information, and a policy which requires that longer stories be broken up into a brief article on page one and anywhere from two to five equally brief inside sidebars. He contends that this does not make *The Olympian* superficial. Enterprise stories are still a priority, he says, but they are simply presented in a format designed to appeal to readers who have less time for the newspaper.

Bob Pedersen, *The Olympian*'s circulation director, sees these changes as directly responsible for making the newspaper one of Gannett's top-growth papers. In a business faced with shrinking or stagnant circulation, Pedersen proudly points out, *The Olympian*'s daily circulation increase of 3 percent in 1993 and 4.6 percent in 1992 has just about kept pace with population growth around Olympia, and the Sunday circulation growth has exceeded it. Critics of the News 2000 program say that, in a fast-growing community like Olympia, circulation should be rising under any circumstances. But Pedersen believes that it is the content changes adopted under News 2000 — particularly the quick-read formats and

the reader service information — that have made the difference. "Frankly, I don't think I could have gotten the impact with the same sales dollars without those improvements," he says.

The *Olympian* is clearly a better newspaper than it was ten years ago, when it was a sleepy, folksy publication that reflected the idiosyncrasies of longtime former editor Dean Shacklett. Since Shacklett was replaced in 1983, his successors have focused the newspaper's coverage on state government, and a recent University of Washington study showed *The Olympian* to be the only major newspaper in the state

that is devoting significantly more space to covering state government than it was a decade ago. And the newspaper has won regional awards for its investigative reporting on state government, including series on the misuse of state telephones by legislators and on illegal campaigning on state time by legislative aides

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(although there are staff members who complain that some of these award-winning stories get done *despite* the News 2000 system).

There are no signs that Vikki Porter, who succeeded McMills in August 1992 after a stint as managing editor of the *Reno Gazette-Journal*, has any intention of modifying the newspaper's News 2000 plan, although she has eased up slightly on the paper's anti-jump policy. Porter, who has worked for *The Denver Post* and *The Arizona Daily Star*, describes herself as an "aggressive" manager dedicated to improving the quality and depth of the newspaper's enterprise coverage without abandoning its reader-friendly format. She dismisses the complaints of reporters who say they feel too strapped in, and too pressured, by the demands of the News 2000 formulas. "I want ideas to percolate up, but when they don't we're not going to wait," she says, adding, "If you're going to go in a direction, you have to be driving the train."

In fact, the direction of *The Olympian* — and the rest of Gannett's newspapers — seems clear. At a meeting of journalism educators in Kansas City last summer, Phil Currie, Gannett's vice-president/news, said that surveys in twelve Gannett markets showed a majority of readers saying their newspapers were getting better and that, company-wide, circulation is up. He went on to say that more News 2000 training is scheduled for Gannett reporters and editors, and he urged the educators to teach the fundamentals of News 2000 as part of their training programs. "News 2000 is working," he said. ♦

What Readers Want: A Vote for a Very Different Model

by Arthur Charity

I've always had a queasy feeling that we journalists respect the American people less than we think we do. We paste democratic slogans on our mastheads (like "That the people shall know," the motto of Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism), but invariably act amazed when our readers display seriousness and intelligence. Witness the myriad columns that followed last year's second presidential debate, trumpeting as if it were breaking news the fact that ordinary people had asked smart questions. Many of us seem to think readers aren't as serious as we are about finding the truth; for proof, just look at the assumption underlying much of our "reader-centered" journalism: Americans can be lured into learning about their own public affairs only by clever writing, dramatic visuals, and more readable type.

I think there's a case to be made, however, that ordinary Americans, far from needing lessons from us in serious journalism, understand what it can and ought to be much better than most reporters and editors do. They are not as blinkered as we are by the traditions of Pulitzer, Murrow, Woodstein, and *60 Minutes*; nor are they distracted, like our consultants with their focus groups, by trying to come up with a sugar coating that will somehow transform news that bores people into news that doesn't.

Having in their private lives bought cars, hired employees, and reached consensus at P.T.A. meetings, they know what kinds of facts and discussion

people need in order to make smart decisions, and they want us to supply them. It seems a simple thing to ask, and they don't understand why they can't get the information — unless it's because we're too incompetent, biased, or arrogant to do the job right.

Imagine for a moment that you are trying to learn about NAFTA — the Canada-U.S.-Mexico free-trade accord — without the benefit of database, Rolodex, or a publisher paying you to do your homework. Now imagine that NAFTA is a car: you could get its specifications and those of alternatives simply by phoning a few local dealers and asking for brochures; you could get educated opinions on its strengths and weaknesses by asking your neighbors and friends, or reading what the experts thought, presented cogently and fairly, in *Consumer Reports*, say, or a reputable auto magazine.

Since NAFTA is a public choice, not a private one, and since it is too big and complicated for neighbors and brochures, you would have to rely totally on the press. What would you find there? A welter of fragmentary opinions and facts, mixed up with thousands of details that don't help you at all. And as for educated opinions on national TV, you would get, not cogency and fairness, but the quirky sort of talk that passes for discussion. There are, at one extreme, shows like CNN's *Crossfire*, where in a recent discussion of NAFTA Michael Kinsley, Pat Buchanan, and their guests spent five and three quarters of their fifteen minutes all talking at once (sample exchange: "Michael, don't be a simpleton"; Kinsley: "You're the simpleton"). There are, at the other extreme, "thoughtful" programs like *MacNeill/Lehrer*, where

Arthur Charity, a former editorial writer for The Ottawa Citizen, is now a free lance based in New York.

for twenty minutes gray suits talked about econometric studies (after agreeing at the outset that they were too inexact to be of much value), then for fifteen minutes blue suits discussed how the president could best "sell" the deal (much like watching a convention of GM dealers brainstorm over how to lure in the suckers).

In the end, you might simply give up.

But Americans don't give up; instead, they try to pick up coherent information and discourse wherever they can find it, including sources that look suspect to us. No wonder that, in the absence of any balanced, comprehensive, and serious journalist's book about NAFTA, Americans are making Ross Perot's unbalanced but informative *Save Your Job, Save Our Country* a paperback bestseller. No wonder they turn to talk shows where, with greater civility than Buchanan or Kinsley, diverse people talk freely in terms of morality, hopes, fears, and life lessons — the many elements of true public discussion that are missing in *MacNeill/Lehrer*. This is intelligence and seriousness at work.

We journalists see as clearly as the public does that our work is full of holes, that it's piecemeal and incomplete, sometimes stupid and shrill. Yet we don't

lose sleep over it — or expect the public to — because we rationalize that even if we're not providing all the facts and civil debate necessary to American democracy, at least we're serving up a basic minimum. If people are really serious, we reason, they can find the missing pieces at work and at home, at community meetings, or at their local church, mosque, or temple.

This just shows how little we comprehend the direness of their predicament.

In his fascinating 1988 book on what's known as zip-code marketing, *The Clustering of America*, Michael Weiss tells the story of a computer wizard named Jonathan Robbin, who in the mid-1970s hit on the idea of dividing the United States population into forty disparate groups, each spread in seemingly random pockets across the country but unified by life-style. His zip-code-based taxonomy became one of the most lucrative ideas in marketing. "Tell me someone's zip code," Robbin boasted, "and I can predict what they eat, drink, drive — even think."

Weiss then goes on to prove Robbin right: statistics show that people who live in those zip codes colorfully dubbed "the Urban Gold Coast" — whether they're on

the Upper East Side of Manhattan or in Chicago's Fort Dearborn — are apartment-rich and well educated, ride trains and read *The Atlantic*, eat rye bread and avoid pork sausage with remarkable regularity. Those who live in the "Shotguns & Pickups" zips of, say, Jewett, West Virginia, or Molalla, Oregon, on the other hand, vote conservative and drive domestics. The two groups are alike in hardly anything but this: when they move to a new place, they gravitate toward their own kind.

My own experience illustrates the point. I used to credit myself with being very broadminded, having grown up in a blue-collar suburb of Los Angeles and gone to a snooty urban college back East; seen thirty-two states mostly by car; and worked in soup kitchens, theme parks, and summer camps. But when I tallied up all the clusters I've seen in my thirty-three years, I found they represent barely two-fifths of America. When I focused on just the places I knew intimately

enough to comprehend, say, the local arguments over abortion or affirmative action, the total plummeted to one-seventh.

Since we no longer fight together in Eisenhower's army or read *The Saturday Evening Post*, *Look*, and *Life* every week from sea to shining sea; since we find it difficult to

even see each other in our daily lives and travels, we Americans really have no place to meet except on television or in the newspapers. Whatever sense of each other we don't get there, we won't have; and if the media can't connect all the clusters in civil discourse, there will be no civil discourse. A shortfall is as good as a failure.

Our isolation may even exceed Weiss's pessimistic picture; harried work schedules, the decline of church-going and social clubs, fault-lines of race and gender, professional jargon and loyalty may make us islands even within our own homes. But that doesn't mean we want to be. When the Minneapolis-St. Paul *Star Tribune* started posing issues-of-the-month a year ago, encouraging readers to form civic roundtables to discuss them, one executive assumed they would just draw the same activist 5 percent who go to school board and city council meetings anyway. Instead, most had never been involved in the community. Coordinator Jeremy Iggers concluded, "I think we take it for granted that these conversations happen casually all the time. My feeling now is, they don't. I think people are hungry for the chance to talk like grown-ups about the things that are happening in their society."

Iggers was further surprised when, in January, the

If the media can't
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paper named racism the issue of the month and people from the suburbs started busing themselves to meeting places deep inside the city, breaking out of their zip-code clusters. According to Iggers, they were saying, "I don't want to sit around discussing this with a bunch of white guys." And instead of being satisfied to meet once and be done with it, as they had with earlier topics like welfare reform and health, several groups met three and four times, over several weeks. Clearly a passion had been tapped that many of the *Star's* readers probably didn't even know they had — a passion for contact.

It's a source of enthusiasm other journalists have tapped as well. In Columbus, Georgia, the *Ledger-Enquirer*, a particularly imaginative daily, has managed to turn a 1987 survey of public malaise into an ongoing civic movement. It used problem areas identified in a Knight-Ridder phone poll as a starting point for six months of intensive research into ways of improving Columbus: using polling, interviews with community leaders and ordinary citizens, ideas from other small cities and considerable in-house pondering, the editors came up with a twenty-five-page supplement, "Columbus Beyond 2000." Like a more famous twenty-five-page supplement that turned into something big — *The Philadelphia Inquirer's* analysis of the U.S. economy, "America: What Went Wrong?" — this appeal to intelligence fairly quickly hit a nerve. Businesspeople and citizens appreciated the thoroughness of the work. Town meetings were organized, and a task force was formed that has continued to function (albeit shakily) even after the paper dropped its sponsorship.

In Washington, D.C., author/mediator John Marks and his organization, Search for Common Ground, found another way to spark constructive dialogue: they produced a series (shown on PBS stations) of videotaped discussions on divisive public issues. For instance, "What's the Common Ground on Abortion?" brought a pro-life and a pro-choice activist together, not to engage in flashy invective or to restate their irreconcilable differences (the staple of normal discussion-TV), but to identify areas on the periphery of the controversy on which they might agree and work together. They managed to find five. Their discussion prompted the Buffalo, New York, Council of Churches to take the dialogue into its community; having been troubled by Operation Rescue's march through town, the Council used Marks's

approach to create the Buffalo Coalition for Common Ground.

Perhaps *The Wichita Eagle* has gone broadest and deepest in actively promoting public discussion. Its seminal Voter Project was profiled in the July 1992 *CJR*, but since then its work has gotten more ambitious. Its current People Project selects such usually wearying perennial issues as crime and education, then acts as a coordination point for a network of intelligent thought and discussion, via staff-written backrounders, interviews, and profiles of programs that work; phone calls, faxes, and written proposals from its readers; directories of local organizations active on the issue; television and radio talk-show tie-ins; and town meetings.

The project is the antithesis of fastidious traditional journalism; discus-

sion is guided away from the headline disagreements that normally paralyze public talk ("Should schools teach liberal arts or not?") to the conflicting core values that lie beneath them ("Is education there to make well-rounded citizens, or is it there to produce people who can fill jobs?"). As the

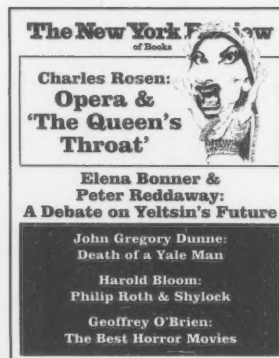
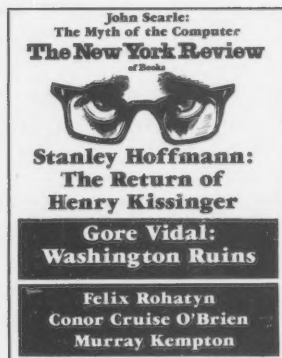
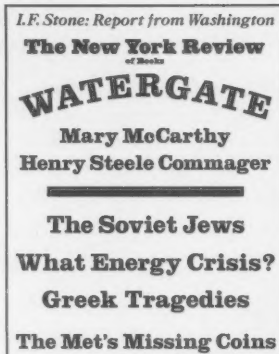
As the paper moved from just-the-facts journalism to a sort of collective soul-searching, reader satisfaction increased

paper has moved from just-the-facts journalism to a sort of collective soul-searching, reader satisfaction has increased.

These odd, intrusive forms of journalism may make professionals wince. But everywhere you look there's evidence that intelligence, thoroughness, and a sense of participating in a real exchange of ideas, not some vaguely defined and unsatisfying "objectivity," are just what people want: more people watch C-Span, an average of five hours a week, than watch all three flashy, sound-bite-laden network news shows combined. Americans have bought 625,000 copies of *America: What Went Wrong?* making that newspaper-series-turned book one of last year's most profitable publications.

In the end, the hunger to meet other Americans, so we can deliberate intelligently as citizens here in our common nation, can only be satisfied by mass media. I'm convinced that people have steadily retreated from newspapers and networks until now because what they found there was shrill and shallow. We will not survive if they continue to feel unsatisfied. Our ideals and our bottom lines both point to the same fact — that we stand to gain quite a lot from a little reckless faith in the American people. ♦

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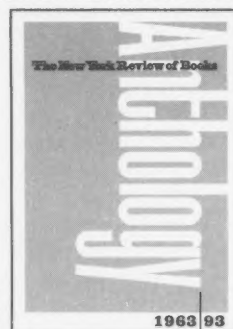
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SALARY SURVEY

THE C.E.O. FACTOR

BY GRAEF CRYSTAL

In 1982, experienced print and TV reporters in top markets earned an average of \$29,000, while the average media c.e.o., among 11 corporations studied, earned \$923,000. So the average media c.e.o. earned 32 times more than the working stiffs who formed the backbone of his organization.

Last year the top print and TV reporters earned an average of \$50,000, for a decade-long increase of 72 percent. But the average media c.e.o. earned \$2,407,000, for a decade-long increase of 161 percent. Thus, while the

average media c.e.o. earned 32 times more than an experienced reporter at a major news outlet in 1982, the ratio had widened, ten years later, to 48 to 1.

Recall here that Plato told Aristotle that no member of a community ought to earn more than 5 times the pay of the lowest worker in the community. And reporters, though pitifully paid, are decidedly not the lowest-paid workers in the media community.

But forget Plato. J.P. Morgan, no friend to socialism, thought that c.e.o.s ought to earn no more than 20 times the pay of a worker. More recently, management guru Peter Drucker also weighed in with a c.e.o.-to-average-employee pay ratio of 20 to 1. (There was no income tax to chip away at top pay rates in Morgan's day, but when Drucker offered his ideal ratio, income tax rates were higher than they are today.)

At *The Wall Street Journal* and *Barron's*, meanwhile, union officers had the business savvy to put this issue to Dow Jones & Co. shareholders this fall — via a proposal that urges the company to limit c.e.o. compensation to

20 times the average employee compensation. The current ratio, the union says, is 40 to 1. Company executives cannot tell employees, on the one hand, that they "all contribute to the bottom line," says union president Ronald Chen, while, on the other hand, disproportionately rewarding themselves when the team is successful.

And then there are the Japanese, with c.e.o. pay ratios (measured off the pay of an average worker) of somewhere in the 15-25 to 1 range, depending on whom you talk to. And the Germans and the French, with pay ratios of around 25-30 to 1. And the British, with a pay ratio of around 30-35 to 1.

In the U.S., the equivalent ratio — c.e.o. to average worker — is 157 to 1. (Note here again that these statistics are based on the pay of average-paid workers, not on the pay of big league reporters.)

Of course, in America top performers are supposed to get big money, right? But are these media c.e.o.s top performers? I measured the compounded total annual return to shareholders (counting both stock price appreciation and rein-

HOW MANY REPORTERS ADD UP TO ONE MEDIA COMPANY CEO?

COMPANY, CURRENT CEO, WITH 10-YEAR STOCK GROWTH*	1982: TOTAL COMPENSATION OF THEN-CEO WITH RATIO TO AVERAGE TOP REPORTER'S PAY**	1992: TOTAL COMPENSATION OF CURRENT CEO WITH RATIO TO AVERAGE TOP REPORTER'S PAY**
CAPITAL CITIES/ABC, INC. DANIEL B. BURKE*** 15.6%	\$1,409,000 49:1	\$5,642,000 113:1
GANNETT CO., INC. JOHN J. CURLEY 12.2%	\$926,000 32:1	\$4,731,000 95:1
TIME WARNER INC. GERALD M. LEVIN*** 12.5%	\$918,000 32:1	\$3,780,000 76:1
CBS INC. LAURENCE A. TISCH 14.7%	\$816,000 28:1	\$2,285,000 46:1
DOW JONES & CO., INC. PETER R. KANN*** 4.3%	\$875,000 30:1	\$2,185,000 44:1
MCGRAW-HILL, INC. JOSEPH L. DIONNE 8.4%	\$692,000 24:1	\$1,691,000 34:1
NEW YORK TIMES CO. ARTHUR OCHS SULZBERGER 12.6%	\$831,000 29:1	\$1,593,000 32:1
TIMES MIRROR CO. ROBERT F. ERBURU 10.3%	\$707,000 24:1	\$1,548,000 31:1
KNIGHT-RIDDER, INC. JAMES K. BATTEN 11.5%	\$930,000 32:1	\$1,328,000 27:1
TURNER BROADCASTING R. E. TURNER 21.1%	\$1,456,000 50:1	\$1,121,000 22:1
WASHINGTON POST CO. DONALD E. GRAHAM*** 16.7%	\$597,000 21:1	\$579,000 12:1

*THE COMPOUNDED ANNUAL TOTAL RETURN ON STOCK: 1982-1992. [THE AVERAGE FOR THE 200 LARGEST U.S. CORPORATIONS, A GROUP THAT INCLUDES MOST OF THESE MEDIA COMPANIES, WAS 18.3%; THE AVERAGE TOTAL COMPENSATION FOR CEO'S IN THAT GROUP WAS \$3,200,000, COMPARED TO \$2,407,000 FOR THE MEDIA GROUP.] **THE AVERAGE PAY FOR A TOP PRINT/TV REPORTER WAS \$29,000 IN 1982, AND \$50,000 IN 1992. ***THESE CEO'S HAVE SERVED LESS THAN THREE YEARS.

vested dividends) during the period commencing December 31, 1982, and ending December 31, 1992, and found that the average media company, among the 11 studied, generated a compounded total annual return of 12.7 percent. That level ranked the average media company in the *bottom* quarter as measured against the total return performance during the same period of the 200 largest companies (largest in terms of the value of their outstanding shares during 1992; the group includes most of these 11 media companies.)

If a pay-for-performance justification won't wash, how about good old supply and demand as a rationale? Reporters are a dime a dozen, so this argument would start, but not good c.e.o.s; thus the reason for the surge in c.e.o. pay in media companies lies purely and simply in the fact that there just aren't that many qualified candidates for these highly demanding jobs.

Here's a flaw in that one: in looking over the list of current media c.e.o.s, I couldn't find a single woman. (In fair-

ness, there used to be one woman heading a major media company — the one located in our nation's capital — but she turned the business over to her son.)

Now if there ever was an industry in which there are plenty of qualified, brainy women, it has to be the media industry. Any one of those women would doubtless waive all her rights under the Equal Pay Act and gladly take the top job for a scant \$1 million per year. So forget supply and demand, too.

Cast your eyes on the table accompanying this article and you'll see the 11 media companies I studied. You'll also see their total compensation to c.e.o.s in 1982 and 1992 and their company's total return performance during that decade. (Total compensation adds together the c.e.o.'s base salary, his bonus for annual performance, the estimated present value at grant of stock options granted during the year, the value at grant of any shares granted during the year, and the value at payout of long-term performance-awards — in cash or in shares — received during the year, as well as miscellaneous compensation; it excludes broad-based fringe benefit programs, such as health insurance and pensions.)

As for the working folks — the print and TV reporters — I looked at Newspaper Guild top minimum salaries for print reporters at 12 major daily, and geographically diversified, newspapers (*The New York Times*, the *Chicago Sun-Times*, the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, the *Washington Post*, the *Detroit Free Press*, the *Rocky Mountain News*, the *Honolulu Advertiser*, the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, and the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*). These top minimum salaries apply to a reporter who typically has five years of experience. The median annual reporter pay among the 12 newspapers was \$28,800 in 1982 and \$44,500 in 1992.

As for TV reporters, I relied on data compiled by Vernon Stone, a professor emeritus at the University of Missouri.

Graef Crystal covers executive compensation in his own newsletter, The Crystal Report, and is a frequent contributor to Pensions & Investments, Worth, and The New York Observer.

According to his information, the median TV reporter in the 25 largest markets was paid \$30,800 in 1983. To get a 1982 figure, I discounted this figure by 5 percent, and came up with \$29,300. For the same markets in 1992, Stone estimated that the annual salary was \$55,000. To obtain the figures used at the beginning of this article, I simply averaged the pay for print and TV reporters in both 1982 and 1992.

One sideline finding here is that, while in 1982 print and TV reporters were earning virtually the same level of compensation, during the ensuing decade the pay of TV reporters outpaced the pay of print reporters, to the point where by 1992 the typical TV reporter was earning 25 percent more than his print counterpart.

Two other findings are worth pointing up. First, I looked at the pay levels of the 11 media c.e.o.s in 1992 and asked myself the following question: Given that there is a huge difference between the lowest-paid c.e.o. (Donald E. Graham of the *The Washington Post*, who earned \$579,000) and the highest-paid c.e.o. (Daniel B. Burke of Capital Cities/ABC, who earned \$5.6 million), what factors might explain the difference? Well, I found that fully 61 percent of the differences in pay could be explained on the basis of differences in company size. But none of the remaining 39 percent of the remaining pay variations could be explained on the basis of differences in company performance. (Actually, my correlation studies showed there to be a *negative* relationship between pay and performance, but the relationship was not deemed to be statistically significant.)

I went on to ask myself a second question: Given that there is a huge difference between the company that gave its c.e.o. the smallest raise between 1982 and 1992 (Turner Broadcasting, which actually cut the pay of its c.e.o., Ted Turner, by 23 percent) and the company that gave its c.e.o. the largest raise during the same period (Gannett, which raised the pay of its c.e.o., John J. Curley, by 411 percent, compared to the pay earned in 1982 by Curley's predecessor, Allen H. Neuharth), can these differences be explained by differences in company performance during the ten-year period? The answer is no. ♦

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THE MEDIA AND ME

CROSSING OVER

BY CHARLES P. WOHLFORTH

When I was covering city government for the *Anchorage Daily News*, I always thought that the intense interview style of my colleague Steve Rinehart was overly confrontational. But last spring, after I was elected to the Municipal Assembly and came under his attack, I realized that his style was exactly right. It was one of many discoveries as a politician I wish I'd made while I was still a reporter.

I was first subjected to Rinehart's questioning when the assembly was considering an ordinance to impose a six-month jail term on hitchhikers. I thought my decision would be easy: I opposed any restriction on hitchhiking as an infringement on civil liberties.

But as the weeks passed and the time for the vote approached, the decision became more difficult. My district is the city's most crime-ridden, and the police said this law would help close down a drug and hooker market that had started in its heart. Moreover, the sponsor of the ordinance was eager to help me out with *my* legislation if I could help him with *his*. And no constituents contacted me saying they opposed the ordinance.

Then Rinehart called me into the stealth hut, a tiny interview room off the *Daily News*'s newsroom named because of its use in office politics. His eyes bulging and his voice raised in apparent incredulity, Rinehart spewed questions at me in rapid fire. He looked like a ter-

rier straining to break free and bite me. Like other interview subjects who had gotten the Rinehart treatment, I stumbled and spluttered, admitted more than I intended, and let my position look as foolish as it actually was.

Besides his intensity, Rinehart had another weapon: he knew a lot more about the issue than I did. A humiliating confirmation of that fact came a couple of days later. With the assembly poised to approve a watered-down hitchhiking law, the *Daily News* pointed out that an identical law was already on the books.

Since resigning from daily newspaper reporting and becoming first a political consultant, then a congressional campaign press secretary, and finally a successful small-time politician, I've found that neither side in the struggle between reporters and politicians really understands the other's weakness. Among my discoveries:

■ Elected politicians at all levels are expected to make decisions on many more issues than they can possibly study in depth; even if a reporter spends only one day on an issue, he or she has more objective information than most of the officials voting on it. Some of my assembly colleagues don't even read the legislation they vote on. (At least I try.)

■ Reporters generally are not skeptical enough of politicians' motivations. Public policy considerations rarely enter into the decisions of most politicians, and the truth is told only when it is convenient.

■ Politicians generally have no more notion of journalists' black-and-white perception of public policy than reporters do of the swarm of gray in

The reporter (second from right) in 1989, covering the Exxon Valdez oil spill; the future assemblyman in 1993, campaigning door to door



Charles P. Wohlforth, a former reporter for the Anchorage Daily News, is an assemblyman and free-lance writer in that city.

which most politicians exist. That's why politicians so often suspect reporters of having political motives.

■ Journalists, divorced from the gritty concerns of commerce and power, are ill-served by their culture of innocence. As a reporter, near the end of my time at the *News*, I covered a meeting of the state power authority, then in the midst of a procurement scandal. The reporters were ordered out of the room so that the authority board and staff could get their stories straight in executive session. Sitting in the lobby with my journalistic colleagues, I heard some of the reporters discussing how hard it was to believe that the men on the authority board had done anything wrong — their statements sounded so public-spirited.

Later, as a consultant attending private meetings with various clients, I often thought of the juicy stories those gullible reporters could write if only they could hear what I was hearing behind closed doors.

Sometimes it seems journalists are the only people who take seriously the pretexts that politicians concoct to explain what they do. As a journalist, I carefully quoted such statements in the morning paper. When I moved to the other side, I found that such statements were made — as cover — only after the media became involved.

Another difference between the two cultures is that, while reporters often have deeper knowledge of the policy issues behind decisions, politicians tend to have broader sources of information.

Local government reporters, at least in a city the size of Anchorage, often don't know that neighborhood controversies are bubbling up until they explode. Community politics works mostly by word of mouth in neighborhood meetings and phone calls. Local government reporters generally are young, transient people; they tend to hang out with other journalists. Some seem to think that not belonging to the community is a sign of ethical objectivity.

For their part, news organizations seldom cover the community council and board and commission meetings where issues develop. By the time those issues get to the level of being formally decided by elected representatives, they are months old. As a result, the public

doesn't learn the real story of how a given decision was arrived at.

Reporters also tend to undervalue information about "boring" issues that privately motivate much of what politicians do. In Anchorage, assembly meetings begin with bid awards for construction jobs and the like. Most of the press corps rolls in an hour late, missing a lot of what's really going on.

One of the biggest battles in my first months was over a contract to build a new police training center. The carpenters union, which has a generous political action committee, didn't have an agreement with the low bidder, although other unions did. The carpenters launched an aggressive campaign to persuade the assembly to reject the contract on the ground that the low bidder hadn't met minority contracting requirements. They won; then the issue was reconsidered but died in a parliamentary gambit, and finally was reintroduced and passed with one changed vote.

In the meantime, the conflict had spread into issues as diverse as police protection, assembly pay, and low-income housing. But none of this made it into print or onto the evening news, and city hall reporters I talked to didn't even know what was going on.

Reporters who focus only on what is colorful and interesting in politics are victims of the cultural divide between themselves and their subject. They should behave more like anthropologists, looking beyond the dances we politicians put on for the tourists to find out how we really live and what motivates us.

I experienced the culture shock that comes from crossing that divide one day when I had to call a lobbyist for a campaign contribution — a lobbyist about whom, in my previous career, I had written a sharply critical article. I was nervous and prepared a long explanation of my article and why it showed that I would use his contribution to bring good government to Anchorage.

Instead, the conversation was extremely brief. As I started my pitch, the lobbyist interrupted me and said, "I'll make this real simple, Charles." He asked if certain elected officials were supporting me. I said they were. He said, "I'll get you some checks."

◆ And he did.

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THE OTHER SIDE OF THE RAINBOW

BY WILLIAM MCGOWAN

From the outside, it must have looked like the classic media power meeting. But inside, last December's joint Diversity Summit meeting of the American Society of Newspaper Editors and the Newspaper Association of America had the air of a tent revival, full of jeremiads, calls for repentance, and holy roller zeal. The push for diversity may be one of the most contentious issues in American journalism, responsible for polarizing, if not balkanizing, more than one newsroom around the country. But you wouldn't have known it from this crowd. Speaker after speaker got up to testify to its saving power.

Sitting smack in the center of the room was Arthur Sulzberger, Jr., the laid-back yet lordly young publisher of *The New York Times*. Sulzberger's front-and-center seat was significant: in less than a year since assuming the helm of the *Times* in January 1992 he had already made diversity a central, defining feature of his new reign. As the tributes to diversity continued, Sulzberger listened with an expression of rapt intensity, then got up to deliver his own appeal: diversity not only made good editorial sense, he claimed, it made good business sense too.

Accepting the premise that a newsroom lacking in proportional representation of nonwhites cannot provide fair and accurate coverage of America's increas-

ingly multicultural society, Sulzberger has called diversity "the single most important issue" his newspaper faces. In 1991 he made a speech to the National Association of Black Journalists in which he referred to it as "our cause." The following year he told the National Gay and Lesbian Journalists Association, "We can no longer offer our readers a predominantly white, straight, male vision of events and say that we, as journalists, are doing our jobs."

Endorsing the first tentative steps toward diversity taken by the *Times*'s executive editor, Max Frankel, after Frankel took over the newsroom in 1986, Sulzberger has urged his executives to redouble efforts to hire and promote minority editors and reporters. In 1991, Gerald Boyd, the first black manager in the *Times*'s Washington bureau, had been made editor of the Metro section, and in 1993 he became the paper's first black assistant managing editor; as Metro editor, Boyd expanded coverage of the outer boroughs, to which the paper

The quest for diversity at *The New York Times* has had unquestionable benefits. But...

had previously given short shrift. Other celebrated diversity hires have been Bob Herbert, who this spring became the first black columnist, and Margo Jefferson, who became the paper's first black critic, leaping from outside the *Times* over the heads of several talented white male veterans whose seniority would have given them preference before.

The quest for diversity has had unquestionable benefits. It has led to the hiring of many talented members of minority groups who might have been ignored by the paper in a less enlightened day. While not too long ago the *Times* was a nearly all-white institution focused on all-white precincts of power, it is now getting closer to the "ideal newspaper" made up of "as many smart people from as many different backgrounds as possible," as one *Times* reporter put it.

Some acknowledge the value of this effort but see a worrisome downside. A recent *Esquire* magazine piece by Robert Sam Anson described the feelings of white reporters at the *Times* who complained of certain stories being reserved for minorities, of editors tailoring stories to suit their political views, and of management so desperate to hire and promote minorities that some have been placed in positions where they were in way over their heads.

It is the impact that the *Times*'s diversity push has had on coverage, however, that has triggered the sharpest criticism. As some see it, the aspects of diversity that aim to enhance racial sensitivity have fostered an atmosphere of "hypersensitivity" that undermines the *Times*'s vaunted tradition of frank, fearless, and forthright exposition of the news.

After combing through the coverage generated by a handful of what might be called "diversity issues" in society at large — racial hiring preferences in the workplace, gays in the military, immigration, and recent episodes of racial unrest in New York City — I'm compelled to agree with those who claim that, instead of providing a reality check on the fashionable cant of the day, the *Times* has become its ready vehicle. It may not be the *Pravda* of p.c., but it is certainly something less than a model of detached neutrality.

And so I would suggest that diversity supporters at the *Times* and other papers ask themselves some hard questions. Does the effort to increase racial sensitivity and diversity in the newsroom create an atmosphere in which troublesome racial and sexual issues cannot be adequately and reliably explored? Can a newspaper like the *Times*, which is so preoccupied with diversity issues inside its own walls — battles over hiring, promotion, and assignment policies, and arguments over the biases of "the dominant culture" — report with critical distance on diversity in the rest of society? Does the effort to hire minority reporters who can identify and articulate separate and distinct minority points of view encourage representation long denied or partisan cheerleading?

Not asking these questions will have consequences both for the *Times* and those American newspapers that look to it as an example of how they should

William McGowan, a former editor at The Washington Monthly, is a free-lance writer in New York. His most recent book is Only Man is Vile: The Tragedy of Sri Lanka.

deal with the challenge of diversity.

As the *Times* makes its own diversity effort, its reporting on diversity in corporate America has been interesting to track. Not two weeks after last December's "summit," a piece by Lena Williams headed COMPANIES CAPITALIZING ON WORKER DIVERSITY appeared on the front page. Defining corporate diversity management as "a desire to recognize, respect, and capitalize on different strands and backgrounds in American society," the December 15, 1992, article explained that not long ago few in corporate America took the concept seriously. Today, however, "more and more employers view diversity as good business as well as good public relations." The article also noted that, in addition to becoming "one of the most popular management concepts of the '90s," it is also "a booming multimillion-dollar business."

The piece did convey some skepticism toward the trend. It voiced doubt about the sincerity, as well as the qualifications, of some consultants entering this booming field. It also made clear that many of the corporations hiring them are only doing so out of obligation. But while Williams referred to a study by the conservative Hudson Institute, which the diversity management industry has embraced as a justification for its existence, she neglected to note an important part of that study — the section on minority preparedness. In it the authors point out that minority groups are underrepresented in corporate America not only because of racial inhospitality but also because of the lack of needed levels of education and skills.

An earlier article about aggressive affirmative action efforts at Corning, Inc. in upstate New York characterized Corning's program as one of corporate America's most ambitious bids at "cultural engineering." The reporter, Peter Kilborn, did note that some white men were "resentful and bristling," but the piece included no interviews that might have made these feelings more intelligible. Instead, there were voices that could have come from a corporate press release. "The competition for me will be more difficult," said one white male who reportedly accepted the effort. "Corning has quotas; I don't resent it. It's a fact of life."

Opposition to dropping the ban on gay military service was treated as homophobic "bigotry"

Ironically, the *Times*'s reporting on the struggle within the press itself in dealing with diversity has been conspicuously wanting. In 1992, the *Los Angeles Times* offered buyouts to some of its senior people in an effort to trim costs in the face of an advertising slump. To management's surprise, the buyout was more attractive than expected. Eighty-eight editorial employees, nearly 10 percent of the newsroom staff, announced they were leaving the paper, four times the number management had planned on. Many were top reporters and editors at the peak of their careers.

According to *Washington Post* media reporter Howard Kurtz, the exodus was a reflection of plummeting morale; in the aftermath of the L.A. riots, management had exacerbated racial strains by intensifying its affirmative action efforts. "There is a factionalism at work at this paper which I think is extremely counterproductive," said one exiting Metro staff veteran. In trying to pacify and placate minorities, this reporter said, management had alienated many of those who had not been alienated before. But the *Times* made only vague references to "dissatisfaction in the working environment" and "the policies of current management," and attributed the popularity of the buyout to its generosity. No references to newsroom racial tensions were made.

Equally telling was its coverage of the adoption of racial hiring quotas at *The Philadelphia Inquirer*. Both *The Washington Post* and the *Times* had reported extensively on an earlier controversy generated by a December 12, 1990, *Inquirer* editorial which suggested that teenage welfare mothers be given Norplant to reduce pregnancies. Such an editorial, many minority staffers had complained, reflected pervasive racism at the paper.

But only the *Post* followed up with a report on how the Norplant contretemps

had been used by minority factions at the paper to force management to increase the paper's racial sensitivity through what editor Maxwell King specifically referred to as hiring "quotas." Although the five-year plan, which would require that 50 percent of newsroom hires be minority and 50 percent be women, was "the most aggressive plan" at any newspaper in the country, as King said in a dramatic newsroom announcement, the *Times* chose not to report on it.

A September 10, 1993, *Times* news story headed GAY JOURNALISTS LEADING A REVOLUTION celebrated the trend of out-of-the-closet journalists, asserting that "there is wide agreement that homosexual journalists are bringing about more, and more sophisticated, treatment of gay subjects." More treatment undoubtedly, as the number of stories related to gay issues and themes has increased dramatically. But whether the coverage is more sophisticated is debatable. On most gay issues — domestic partnership, AIDS, curriculums to teach tolerance for gays in the schools, even the issue of a gay-inclusive St. Patrick's Day parade in New York — the *Times* has demonstrated partisan sympathy.

A case in point was its handling of the gays-in-the-military issue. While the editorial stance was that opposition to dropping the ban on gay military service was nothing other than homophobic "bigotry," feature articles celebrated gay servicemen. Joseph Steffan, a former midshipman who was kicked out of Annapolis shortly before graduation for revealing he was gay, was "every mother's dream for her daughter," wrote Jeffrey Schmalz, an openly gay reporter, in a February 4, 1993, Style section profile. "Handsome as can be, with a principled intelligence and a diffident way." Also cheered was Scott Peck, the gay son of a Marine colonel, who was described in an editorial as "a recruiter's dream."

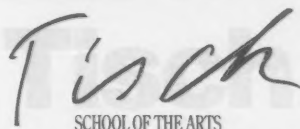
While the more right-wing ends of the opposition did indeed invoke antediluvian stereotypes of gays as predators and perverts — one Navy spokesman claimed that "homosexuals are notoriously promiscuous" — other supporters of the ban raised thoughtful objections that were given short shrift.

For example, reservations dealing with the impact that sexual relations — consensual or unwanted — would have on morale were airily dismissed with the suggestion that sexual relations between consenting gays in the ranks would have no impact on unit cohesiveness or morale, and that anyone who was the target of an unwanted overture only had to insist that “no means no.”

Existing rules prohibiting demonstrations of affection between males and females would work for gay relations too, the *Times* implied in a piece by Jane Gross headed FOR THE MILITARY, POLICING SEX IS NOTHING NEW. The article ignored what many feminists say is the military’s rampant problem of sexual harassment, as well as the embarrassing rash of pregnancies that occurred among servicewomen on duty in the gulf war. Also ignored were statistics the *Times* itself had reported on earlier — that in 1992, 37 of the 360 sodomy investigations by the Army involved rape. Another study, reported on in *The Washington Times* but not in *The New York Times*, found that eight out of ten homosexuals court martialed by the Army for sexual misconduct in the last four years had involved a sexual assault.

The sense of realities denied in the service of gay partisanship was nowhere more obvious than in the coverage of April’s gay march in Washington. “Tomorrow’s parade can be helpful,” declared the editorial page the day before, if it held up “a mirror for the nation to see its own reflection.” Indeed, middle class America did see its own reflection. The *Times*’s Jeffrey Schmalz, in a page-one report, focused largely on feelings of gay pride and solidarity among the marchers. But, as *The Washington Post*’s Kurtz pointed out, Schmalz failed to acknowledge the topless lesbians, the men in leather harnesses, and the cross-dressers seen by everyone who watched C-Span, as well as the lesbian comedian at the podium who said she wanted “to fuck” Hillary Clinton and the speaker who said she “wanted to get it on with Anita Hill.”

Of course, the bizarre behavior of a few shouldn’t have discredited the cause espoused by the thousands who really were the boys and girls next door. But neither should the *Times*’s coverage have deliberately denied the obvious. →



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The *Times's* treatment of immigration, like that of gays in the military, is marked by only the most cursory acknowledgment of unpalatable realities.

A prime example is the exaggerated sensitivity with which it has reported on drug dealing in Manhattan's Washington Heights, one of the city's most violent neighborhoods. Washington Heights has a huge population of illegal aliens, about 100,000. Police estimate that half of all crimes committed there, most of them drug-related, are committed by illegals. Many of these drug dealers are street toughs called "Dominicanyorks." Recruited in the Dominican Republic, they usually reside in the U.S. illegally and serve as foot soldiers in the street trade for a couple of years before returning home.

In the summer of 1992, riots erupted in Washington Heights after a plainclothes police officer killed an illegal Dominican drug dealer who had pulled a gun on him. The city's other papers reported that the disorder was fed in large part by drug dealers who saw an opportunity to create a political problem for the police so they would back off from aggressive street-level antinarcotics tactics. But the *Times* seemed unwilling to challenge the assertion by a Latino community activist that allegations that drug dealers were inciting violence were "totally ridiculous and incendiary."

Another reflection of the *Times's* aversion to linking crime and illegal immigration was apparent in the way it treated the criminal involvement and illegal immigration status of the dead drug dealer. According to police, Jose "Kiko" Garcia was a known associate of a gang called Los Cibanos, had been convicted of felony narcotics possession, and had violated his probation by giving officials a false address and dropping out of sight. Authorities also said he was an illegal alien who had slipped into the country four years before.

Information on Garcia's criminal record was reported by other papers several days ahead of the *Times*; when the *Times* did report it, it still conveyed the impression that Garcia was a victim of racist police brutality. And when mention was made in the *Times* of Garcia's illegal status, it was to create sympathy for him by implying that the lack

The search for minority points of view has opened up opportunities for racial and ethnic cheerleading

of a green card made employment difficult and drug dealing inevitable. The question of how a felon like Garcia received probation rather than deportation was not pursued.

Immigration never became the presidential campaign issue in 1992 that Pat Buchanan and David Duke wanted to make it. It was, however, a heated issue in several state-level campaigns, particularly in California, where the mounting anti-immigrant backlash is most intense. But instead of analyzing the backlash dispassionately, the *Times* dismissed it as an avatar of nativism. A case in point was a June 13, 1993, *Week in Review* piece that likened calls for gaining control of the borders to the xenophobia sweeping Germany and to America's nativist past. "Americans, pinched and worried, say asylum seekers are a burden. They have said so before," read the pull-quote.

The politics of race and crime in New York City has always proved troubling for the *Times* to cover, but it has been especially vexing while David Dinkins has been mayor. Like the *Times*, the Dinkins administration has devoted itself to the cause of diversity. The "gorgeous mosaic" model of governance, a race-conscious rejection of the old colorblind, melting pot ideal, seems to be to politics what the doctrine of newsroom diversity has become to journalism.

Intriguingly, the most egregious shattering of that mosaic, the Crown Heights riots in August 1991, also represented one of the *Times's* most profound journalistic failures in years. Instead of providing accurate and complete information about this incident of racial unrest, the *Times* left the dereliction of the city's political officials and leaders unbarred for more than two years, until a state fact-finding commis-

sion revealed the real story. Had the *Times* performed as well on Crown Heights as it does routinely on other tough stories, it could have spared itself the embarrassment of having to run a front-page mea culpa two days after the state report came out this summer. In that piece it admitted to "blindspots" that made its reporting on the official malfeasance behind the disorder "so deficient as to be misleading."

The accident that killed Gavin Cato, a seven-year-old black boy hit by a Jewish driver who had run a red light, set off an explosion of anti-Semitic disturbances. As the *Times* reported on August 20, "More than 250 neighborhood residents, mostly black teenagers shouting, 'Jews! Jews! Jews!'" jeered the driver of the car, a Hasidic man, and then turned their anger on the police." Later that day, Yankel Rosenbaum, a Jewish scholar from Australia, was stabbed to death by a mob of up to twenty black youths shouting, "Get the Jew!" Meanwhile, rioting continued for three nights of escalating violence, which the state report called "the worst outbreak of racial violence" to afflict New York City "in twenty years." The disorder was not quelled until the fourth night, after Mayor Dinkins, himself the target of rocks and bottles, ordered the police to crack down.

Reporting the anti-Semitic taunts and the fact that most of those arrested were blacks, the *Times's* street reporting left little doubt that the basic story of Crown Heights was one of black mobs attacking Jews in retaliation for the death of Gavin Cato. Still, news analysis searched for the "context" of the riots as a way of blaming societal racism and excusing black mobs in Crown Heights for their misdeeds. One story was headed FOR YOUNG BLACKS ALIENATION AND A GROWING DESPAIR TURN INTO RAGE; another story, headed THE BITTERNESS FLOWS IN 2 DIRECTIONS, explained that the Hasidim were often the focus of anger because of the widespread belief that they receive special treatment from the police and other city institutions and get help that blacks sorely need in a time of dwindling resources. (*Newsday*, too, reported this widespread belief — but went on to commit substantial resources to check it out, and concluded that there was no basis for the charge.)

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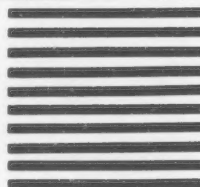
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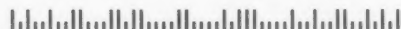
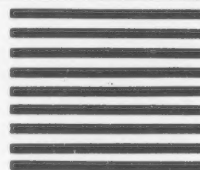
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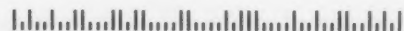
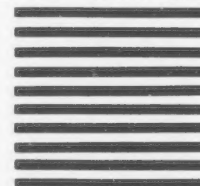
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Overall, the inattention columnists and editorialists gave Rosenbaum's killing stood in stark contrast to their response to the racially motivated murder of Yusuf Hawkins, a black teenager, in the Bensonhurst section of Brooklyn by six white boys two years earlier.

The most egregious lapse on the *Times's* part, though, was in not throwing its reportorial resources at the question of why the police failed to crack down on the rioters until the fourth night of the disturbance. Hasidic leaders, who filed a lawsuit against the city, charged that such restraint had been ordered by the mayor so that black youth could "vent their rage."

Were police afraid to act lest they be accused of brutality in the wake of the Rodney King beating in March 1991? Was the slow response motivated by fears that a crackdown would have adverse political repercussions for Dinkins in the black community? Whatever the answers to these questions, the *Times* seemed to have absolved Dinkins of any responsibility for the way the disturbances were handled. In a January 1992 editorial reviewing the first two years of Dinkins's mayoralty, the *Times* concluded, "But he has learned.... When Crown Heights erupted, Mr. Dinkins was at his peace-making best."

Is it wrong to blame efforts to increase racial representation and sensitivity in the newsroom for the skewed reporting on diversity issues alone? Indeed it is. The problem is the way these diversity efforts have worked in conjunction with tendencies within the institutional culture of the *Times* to create an atmosphere that discourages skepticism toward fashionable nostrums.

Consider also that the emphasis on racial and ethnic diversity has ignored class diversity, which has resulted in reporting with an elitist cast that is often remote from middle- and working-class realities. More *Front Page* and less Foucault might curb the paper's seeming obsession with victim-oppressor dynamics and the trendy insistence that diversity represents the only stay against American society's intractable racism.

Another factor to be considered is the way the search for separate and distinct minority points of view has opened up opportunities for racial and ethnic

cheerleading and created a climate of racial and intellectual intimidation. Racial intimidation in terms of "a terror of offending any of the victimized groups," as one senior Metro reporter puts it; "all someone has to do is make a charge of racism and everyone runs away." Intellectual intimidation in terms of the way the publisher has made diversity such a personal crusade, which makes career-conscious reporters and editors reluctant to speak out against the party line. "You aren't going to get ahead at this newspaper by telling Arthur that we've gone too far and are losing credibility," says the jaded Metro reporter. "Arthur is certainly not going

to race down to the newsroom and embrace you."

American society is at a crossroads, and to the extent that uncritical enthusiasm for diversity delays needed measures to deal with it, or prescribes the wrong ones, we will suffer the consequences in the future. If a society of such staggering, ever-increasing diversity as the United States is ever to work out a framework for handling its multiplicity, it has to abandon wishful thinking and come to grips with reality. This process is only undermined by an agenda that encourages intellectually dishonest news reporting and analysis, however well-intended. ♦

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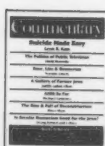
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BOOKS

REVOLUTIONARY AGENT?

BY MICHAEL SCHUDSON

In this tract on the worldwide communications revolution, Michael O'Neill, the respected former editor of the *New York Daily News*, abandons all his best journalistic instincts. It's not that he writes off the cuff. He did some homework. He has read widely if not deeply. He has also traveled and interviewed, particularly in Russia and Eastern Europe. The most valuable chapter in the book is the first — a brief but lively account of the contribution of radio, CNN, telephone, and computer networks to fending off the 1991 coup

THE ROAR OF THE CROWD: HOW TELEVISION AND PEOPLE POWER ARE CHANGING THE WORLD
BY MICHAEL O'NEILL TIMES BOOKS
228 PP. \$21

attempt in the Soviet Union. This chapter is also most nearly a work of journalism.

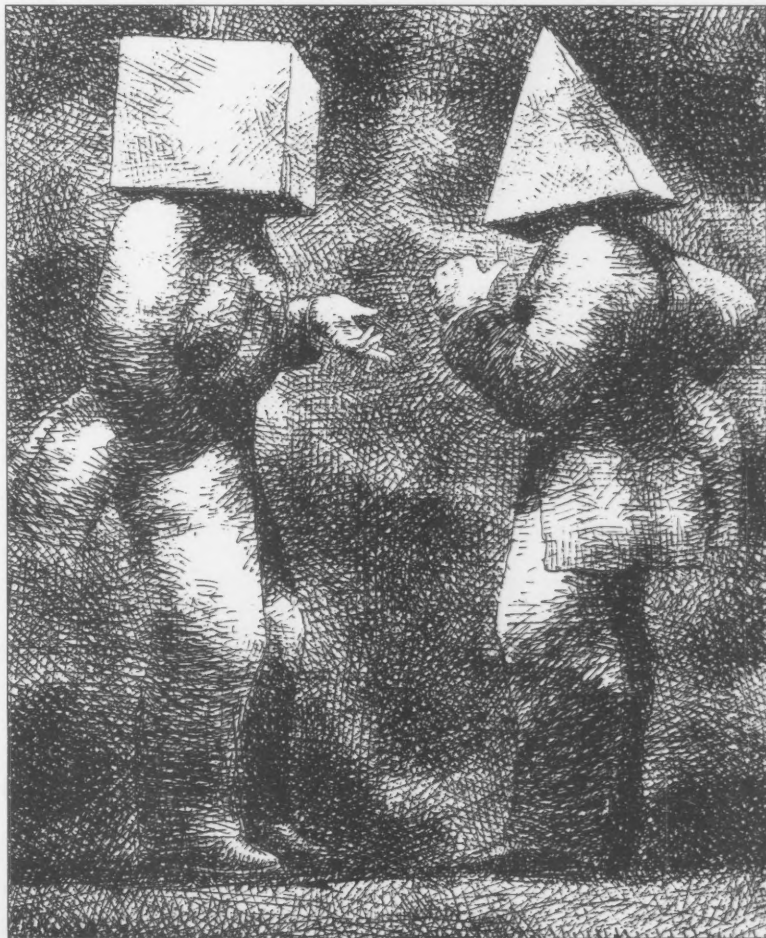
From this case study the book leaps to an effort to convince readers that electronic communications — especially television, and television-driven popular emotions — are important. Who could disagree? To whom is O'Neill speaking? And to what end? What are we to learn about how society works or should work from the tame conclusion that communication counts?

When O'Neill holds not only that television and related communication forms matter but also that the communications revolution is "the supreme catalyst of change" and that "no other single factor has been more important" in producing the democratic transition in Eastern Europe and elsewhere around

the world, he ups the rhetorical ante. He cannot sustain a claim like this without giving a hearing to likely alternatives. Two come quickly to mind. First, an expansionist world capitalist economy, coupled with economic stagnation in socialist societies, has a lot to do with the past decade of world history, TV or no TV. Second, the idea of democracy has a magnetic power in itself, prior to and separable from the electronic (and nonelectronic) media that transmit it.

But in the world according to O'Neill, neither economy nor the force of ideas nor politics nor anything else gets a second glance.

If democracy were ascendant everywhere television antennae spring up, O'Neill might have a case. But there's a great deal of variation to comprehend in the growth of "people power." That 800 million Chinese watch television did not prevent repression at Tiananmen Square. Why was television of so little



*Michael Schudson is professor of communication and sociology at the University of California, San Diego. His most recent book is *Watergate in American Memory*.*

avail in China and of such overwhelming force in Russia at the same time?

The constant exception to O'Neill's generally cheerful thesis is the United States. O'Neill marvels that television (along with videotapes and fax) has done so much to enhance people power in Russia, Eastern Europe, Africa, Asia, and Latin America, but in the next breath he complains that television has "denatured" American elections and the presidency. For the rest of the world, the new communications have encouraged a "near pandemic of public activism," but in the United States television isolates individuals and "tends to pull them out of neighborhoods and communities." In the Soviet Union, television exacerbated regional and ethnic differences, but in the United States its rise helped ensure that "communities lost their distinguishing marks." In the rest of the world, television is the chief stimulus for making people aware of alternative human experiences, but in the United States TV is no more than a "mind-numbing consumer of people's time." O'Neill the optimist on world television needs to consult with O'Neill the pessimist on the American version.

The book just doesn't listen to itself. Take O'Neill's claims that communications technology has made human rights a world issue and that the economic imbalance between northern and southern hemispheres is almost completely ignored in the TV age because of the "narcissism of the principal actors." How can world opinion be effectively promoting human rights in Chapter 7 and narcissistically ignoring world poverty in Chapter 8? Even if you accept that this is the case, the question becomes which issues reach the international media radar screen and which do not, and how and why. That's where journalists most actively enter the drama and where O'Neill might have commented with authority, but he does not even notice.

The book is full of quotations from eminent academics and those old familiar seers of communication Marshall McLuhan and Jacques Ellul. That's not itself a complaint. Journalists *should* read and learn from the academy. But they should not suspend critical judgment just because they are quoting Ph.D.s. Academics are engaged in dis-

Why was television of so little avail in China and of such overwhelming force in Russia at the same time?

putation. Their pronouncements, especially of the sort O'Neill tends to light on — the most provocative, generalized, and bloated they offer — are frequently rhetorical exaggerations of one or another side of a debate. O'Neill offers no hearing to the other side, not even recognition that it exists.

Though citing a score of academics, this is an anti-intellectual book: it suppresses half the conversation. For example, in criticizing contemporary American politics, O'Neill insists that TV has made a world in which "instant public emotions override reflection and deliberation in the making of policy." But this formulation masks both real debate and historical reality: there has never been a choice between government-by-television and government-by-reflection. The choice has been between government-by-TV and government-by-party-insiders. Good arguments can be made both for and against the democratic political reforms that helped enlarge television's role in politics. At least, there needs to be recognition that an argument exists and that neither television-dominated nor party-dominated democracy is the spitting image of "reflection and deliberation."

Or take O'Neill's view that the new media have a natural democratizing tendency; because they spread information so widely, elites cannot possibly hold on to power so exclusively: "The whole thrust of modern communications is to democratize knowledge and, therefore, to democratize power." George Orwell would disagree, along with many students of privacy and civil liberties in the shadow of expanding state capacities for surveillance and control. There is simply no agreement that picture tubes or microchips carry preordained political directions. But you won't see the

debate engaged in this book.

O'Neill seems unable to recognize, or pass up, the flabby generalization. Television "uniquely sweeps knowledge across the barriers of literacy," radio apparently forgotten. Television is "the greatest nationalizing force in American history," something that the writers of the Constitution, the soldiers of the Civil War, the builders of the railroads, or the veterans of World War II might well dispute. "Political parties no longer count for much in picking candidates." Perot, yes, but Bush? Clinton? Yeltsin? Thatcher?

And can we declare a moratorium on quoting Walter Mondale's fatuous remark that he lost the 1984 election because television never warmed up to him and he never warmed up to television? Maybe we should just not quote election losers on why they lost — ever. Politicians, like intellectuals, speak in particular contexts for particular purposes. In colonial days, losing candidates attributed defeat to the decline of republican virtue in the citizenry, just a generation before the greatest republican revolution in modern history. In our day, they attribute defeat to television; in both cases the subtext is that the people were fools, emotion held sway, and reason (which of course they themselves represent in pure form) was upended by campaign demagoguery. Losers are entitled to any consolation they can find, but analysts don't need to take their rationalizations seriously. Enough already.

DIMINISHED RETURNS

BY BARBARA BELEJACK

In *The Press and the World of Money*, veteran reporter John Quirt delivers a mixed bag of media history and criticism, reporter war stories, and Q&A

Barbara Belejack, a free-lance writer in New York, was a 1992-93 fellow in the Knight-Bagehot Program for Economic Journalism at Columbia University.

interviews with the usual suspects, including economists John Kenneth Galbraith and Milton Friedman and a disgruntled *Wall Street Journal* supply-sider or two. Quirt comes out punching, criticizing the mainstream press in general — no names here — for falling asleep during the S&L crisis. He shows how easy it is to be misled by statistics and the masters of spin control, a lesson he learned early in his career while covering an automotive giant named Studebaker.

Not surprisingly he comes down harder on television than on the print media, castigating it for what he calls a "litany" of sins: "bewitchment with conflict at the expense of understanding and with personalities at the expense of issues, as well as self-aggrandizement and an overemphasis on exclusive interviews that lend themselves to hype and are in vogue as a measure of success in bigtime TV journalism."

All the evils of the media come together in an anecdote involving economist Barry Bosworth. While working for the Carter administration, Bosworth frequently served as the White House designated hitter, sent to appear on television programs to

THE PRESS AND THE WORLD OF MONEY: HOW THE NEWS MEDIA COVER BUSINESS AND FINANCE, PANIC AND PROSPERITY, AND THE PURSUIT OF THE AMERICAN DREAM
BY JOHN QUIRT, ANTON/CALIFORNIA—
COURIER, 364 PP. \$24.95

explain its economic policy. One such interview was with Barbara Walters. After reviewing a list of questions that had been compiled for her, Walters complained during a commercial break that she didn't understand the questions. No problem, her producer replied. "You don't have to understand them. Just ask them. He'll explain them."

If the Bosworth anecdote is illustrative of economic journalism at its worst, it's also illustrative of Quirt's analysis at its worst. Is anyone out there genuinely surprised to learn that the ninety-second sound bite with expert/oracle/spin doctor of the day is superficial? Or that some Manhattan editors are out of touch with what's going on in the rest of the country?

In place of analysis we get platitudes.

The Wall Street Journal sets the standards. *The New York Times* has dramatically improved its business coverage. *Forbes* writes critical profiles of industry leaders. *Fortune* and *Institutional Investor* aren't what they used to be, but they used to be great. (Bloomberg news service, the all-business news agency, is ignored.)

For a longtime business and economics reporter, Quirt seems remarkably uncurious about the canons and conventions of business and government economists, as well as those of mainstream and academic economists. In a global economy, free market ideology is the closest thing we have to a

world religion; the economic catechism is deserving of scrutiny. Quirt misses the opportunity and, like the journalists he criticizes, relies on oracles — a little Friedman here, a little Galbraith there.

It's not enough to say that journalists frequently misinterpret the numbers. Even when they get the numbers right, they should question their implications. What intrinsic values do the leading economic indicators have? What do unemployment statistics really mean? Of what value are domestic trade figures, when those figures frequently represent branches of transnational corporations trading with themselves across national boundaries? What does a spec-

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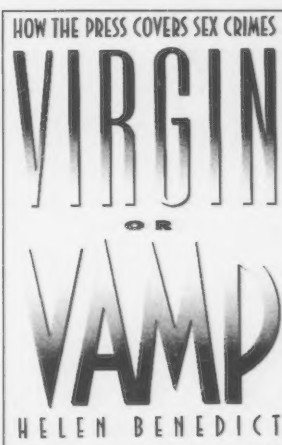
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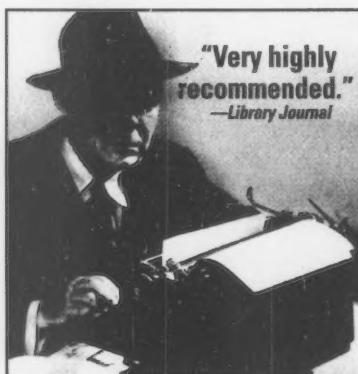
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tacularly high rate of economic growth in China really mean? Ask an economist to interpret a society, ask a human rights lawyer, ask an anthropologist, ask a cross section of that society's population, and you will get a series of conflicting interpretations. How much value do we place on the economist's interpretation? These aren't mere academic questions. They go to the heart of newsroom politics as well, and the relationships between bureaus and sections. What determines whether a story is a political or an economic story?

The raw material for a deeper analysis is available. Quirt recalls, for example, a story he did for CBS on third world indebtedness and the policies of the World Bank and its affiliate, the International Development Association (before third world indebtedness erupted into the major bank story of much of the '80s) — and to which William Paley, the network's chairman, objected. Although CBS executives liked the idea of expanded business coverage in theory, they were gun-shy, Quirt concludes, when it came to stories that were less than enthusiastic about "their peers" in the money world.

Unfortunately his analysis ends there, bypassing such issues as interlocking directorates, media concentration, the role of advertising, and the media's own relationship to the world of finance. Quirt mentions Ben Bagdikian in a footnote — much that is controversial or intriguing appears in a footnote — but nowhere does he indicate that he has given serious consideration to the case Bagdikian makes in *The Media Monopoly*. Nor does he discuss the replacement of labor reporting with features or columns about the workplace.

The press is an industry itself, of course, and Quirt is remiss in failing to discuss the impact that tremendous technological changes have had — and will have — on business and economic coverage. He has, in fact, no warnings or suggestions for improvement. Both Quirt and his sources convey a vague understanding that more business and economic coverage doesn't necessarily mean better coverage. Unfortunately, in the case of *The Press and the World of Money*, more adds up to less. ♦

SHORT TAKES

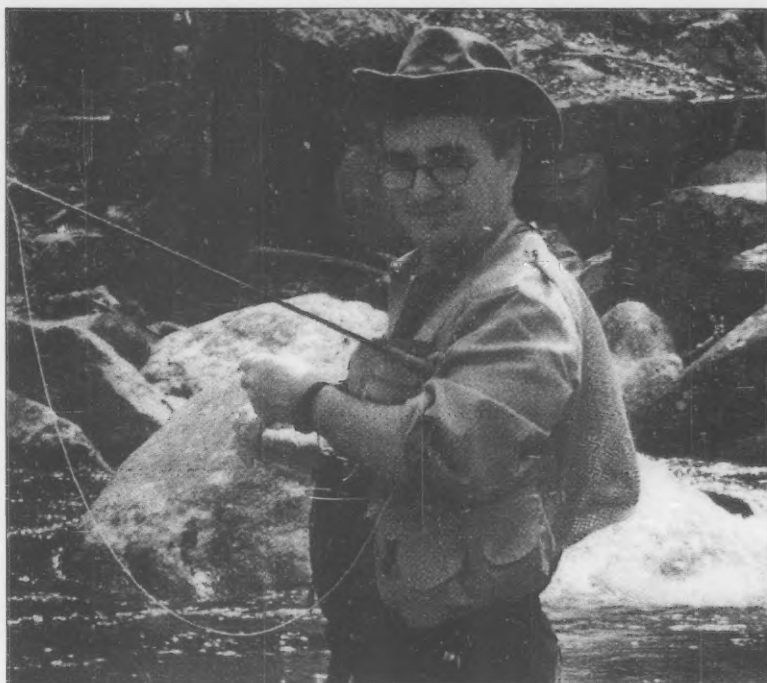


AP/WIDE WORLD

GRAND ILLUSION

Alex had discarded his illusions about magazine publishing when *Vogue* began printing the little bar code on its cover in the 1970s, for easy checkout at the supermarkets. "That's when I realized that basically this is a business," he said. "I used to think we were communicating civilization, communicating culture, treating women in a serious way by offering them intelligent features. I even thought that by publishing all those essays and photographs on art and artists — not frivolous artists like Erté or Vertès, either, but the major School of Paris masters, and Rauschenberg and Johns, and Richard Serra, and de Kooning and Newman and Rothko — that we were performing a real service, because one of the magical things about exposing people to art is that art allows you to dare, and maybe, maybe, maybe some of that remains and the reader is subliminally altered. But it was [Diana] Vreeland who said to me, 'Alex, after all, this is just entertainment.' And, of course, she was right. Producing a fashion magazine is theater. It's a show, a monthly show — bimonthly in the old days. You have to have variety, surprise, contrast, pace, and not attach enormous importance to any of it, because it's fleeting. You make a decision, it's printed, it's gone."

FROM **ALEX: THE LIFE OF ALEXANDER LIBERMAN**, BY DODIE KAZANJIAN AND CALVIN TOMKINS. ALFRED A. KNOPF. 385 PP. \$27.50.



JANE STANTON HITCHCOCK

CASTING OUT FEAR

In Washington, I discovered that I was fearful of one of my superiors, a man with whom I had had conflict in the past but was now on a friendly basis. Indeed, he had played a central role in promoting me to run *The New York Times's* Washington bureau and was supportive, even solicitous, in every way. Yet I feared his condemnation.

It made me embarrassed to be in my late forties and to be fearful of another man. I did not share this with anyone. But I fell into a habit. Every morning when I got to the office, I took a piece of adhesive note paper and wrote on it this sentence: "It is a good day to die." I then stuck this piece of paper beside the intercom through which I talked each day with this person.

"It is a good day to die" is, of course, the battle cry of the Dog Soldiers, the warrior class of the Cheyenne Indians and the most feared fighters among the Plains Indians.

One day, Ferne Horner, the office manager in the *Times* Washington bureau and the only woman I know personally who has been a paratrooper in the Israeli army, came in and pointed to the note. "I know what you're doing," she said.

She remarked that Crazy Horse, the greatest war chief of the Oglala Sioux, had borrowed this cry from the Cheyenne and used it to prepare the confederated armies of the Plains Indians for the battle at Little Big Horn. "It works," she said.

"I know," I said.

And it had....

[Sometime later,] I went to the canyon..., hiking carefully up the rock-boned shore and casting carefully into each promising eddy. I fished alone from morning until great shards of black shadow lay across the walls and the Gros Ventre in its rushing down became opaque, indifferent, and a little dangerous-looking. Beside those waters, the death song of the Cheyenne entered me, filled me up, and I knew that it was a good day to die. And I understood, on the stroke of that moment, that the cry of the Dog Soldier is not about fatality but about freedom.

FROM **FLY FISHING THROUGH THE MIDLIFE CRISIS**,
BY HOWELL RAINES. WILLIAM MORROW AND COMPANY. 352 PP. \$22.

INNOCENTS ABROAD

The photographs [in *National Geographic* magazine] have exercised a conservative force within the culture. They have rarely cried out for change, raised painful, unresolvable questions, embarrassed, or caused discomfort. In general, they have existed as a beautiful, somewhat compelling body of evidence that the third world is a safe place, that it is made up of people basically like us, that the people who are hungry and oppressed have meaningful lives, and that the conflicts and flare-ups we hear of in the news occur in a broader context of enduring values and everyday activities. These images obscure the American relationships with the third world that have structured life there in profound ways; they deny real social connections even as they evoke empathy. One can imagine these photographs doing otherwise, however.... They might question the power we have had to control the lives of others and to leave our own unexamined.

FROM **READING NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC**, BY CATHERINE A. LUTZ AND JANE L. COLLINS. THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO PRESS. 312 PP. \$59.95 (CLOTH); \$19.95 (PAPER).



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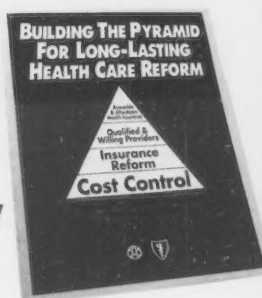
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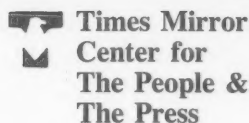
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POLITICS, NOT PEOPLE, DOMINATE COVERAGE

The story of health care reform, as reported in five of the country's major daily newspapers over a four-month period, was largely about its likely impact on institutions rather than individuals. Far more attention was given to politics than to patients.

Spring through the summer saw a steady increase in the amount of newspaper space devoted to debates and maneuvers among organizations which underwrite or support the delivery of health care. There was no comparable rise in space devoted to the needs, wants, and concerns of those who receive — or don't receive — health care.

Only 12% of all stories during the study period focused on the potential impact of health care reform on individuals and their families. More common were stories that dealt with the impact of reform on the health care system as a whole¹ (41%) or considered the political ramifications of reform (23%).

Very frequently, stories described the possible components of the Clinton plan (47% of all stories). Their most typical themes were the plan's organization, who would pay for it, and what would be covered by it. But the politics of the reform was the single specific topic that received the most coverage during the period. It was the principal subject of 24% of all news accounts.

Short-changed as a result were those facets of health care that impact strongest on the public. Less than a dozen dealt

substantively with restrictions on choice of physicians and on the quality of care.

The study found more similarities than differences in the way individual newspapers handled the subject of health care reform. By and large the coverage was judged even-handed when it dealt with the prospects for health care reform. Nearly three fourths of stories (72%) balanced favorable and unfavorable views about the chances that reform would be enacted. However, as commentary became a larger proportion of the coverage over time, content became increasingly critical.

Hillary Rodham Clinton was the main news figure in health care reform stories during the period, cited three times more often than President Clinton. For the most part, the coverage of both Clintons was in balance, or neutral, although she received more positive treatment than he.

These are the findings of the first phase of a long-term study of how major print and electronic news media are informing the American public about health care reform. This first phase focused on national newspapers; later reports will also monitor coverage by network news shows, news weekly magazines, as well as regional and minority newspapers. Sponsored by the Kaiser Family Foundation, the study is being conducted by the Times Mirror Center for the People and the Press in association with the *Columbia Journalism Review*.

This first phase is a "content analysis" of health care reform

¹ The system embraces providers, suppliers, insurers, and other elements.

coverage that appeared from April 1 through July 31 in the *Los Angeles Times*, *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Post* and *USA Today*. These five newspapers were chosen because they have large and widespread circulations, influential readers, and affect the coverage that other news media give to major stories.

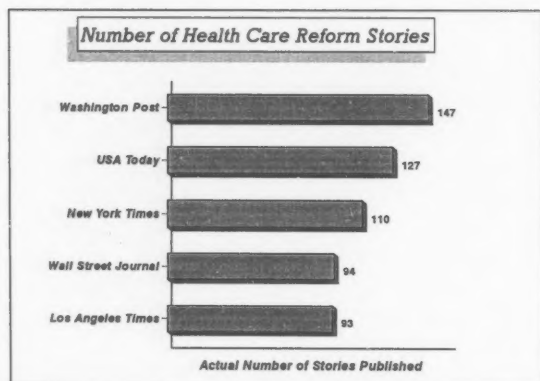
The analysis examined the various categories of coverage including "news stories," "backgrounders," editorials, and other types of commentary such as "Op-Ed" essays. Over the course of the study period, 47% of all articles were categorized as news, 34% as backgrounders and 19% as editorials or commentary.

Content-analysis factors of each article included: type of story, source of story, section of the paper in which it appeared; day and month; length of the story; the specific subject matter or most important themes of each story; the focus of the impact of the story; its perceived bias, or "spin" (to judge whether its thrust was neutral, negative, or positive in terms of the balance of quoted sources or the view expressed by the commentator).

In releasing the first phase of the study, Drew E. Altman, President of the Kaiser Family Foundation, noted: "As health care becomes a leading national health issue, the media will play a central role in informing the public and influencing policy. Journalists will be reporting an enormously complex debate. In sponsoring this media-monitoring project, the Foundation hopes to provide a tool with which journalists can judge how well they are informing the public. It is just one of the programs the Foundation has launched in the past year to help the media cover health care. Others include a fellowship program for health journalists and regional press briefings on health reform. Our goal is an informed public."

A STORY A DAY

For the 122-day period reviewed, coverage averaged at least one item a day in each paper. Altogether, 571 published items

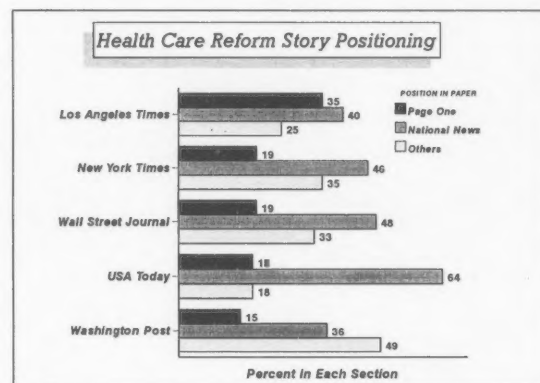


dealing with various aspects of national health care reform were assessed. Most appeared in *The Washington Post* (147

items) followed by *USA Today* (127 items), *The New York Times* (110), *The Wall Street Journal* (94) and the *Los Angeles Times* (93).

The most frequently occurring (modal) length of a story was 500-999 words, except in *USA Today*, where it was 300 words or less. In *USA Today*, however, one-quarter (26%) of the stories were 500 words or longer. In the other papers, more than three-quarters (80%) of the stories were 500 words or longer and a third (33%) of all the stories were 1,000 words or longer. Overall, articles became shorter over the course of the surveyed period. The proportion of stories 1,000 words or longer declined steadily, from 32% in April, to 17% in July.

Health care reform remained an important story in all five papers during this period. But it represented only a small fraction of their front-page articles, between 4% (*USA Today*) and 2% (*The Wall Street Journal*). The *Los Angeles Times* had



the highest number of front-page stories on health care reform (33), despite having the fewest total number of stories on the subject. It also ran the largest number of front-page stories of all kinds (1,086) during this period.

The Wall Street Journal, which carried almost as many stories on the front page (1,000) as the *Los Angeles Times*, had the fewest front page stories on health care reform (18). *USA Today* ran slightly more front page stories about health care reform (23) than *The Washington Post* (22), even though it carried substantially fewer front page stories than *The Post* (664 vs. 847).

Our conclusion is that all five papers gave health care reform comparable space and emphasis. Differences in front-page play, like differences in story length, appear to be largely the result of format differences rather than meaningful differences in news judgment.

PATTERNS OF HEALTH CARE REFORM COVERAGE

The amount of coverage in all five papers changed over the four-month period. In each paper, it peaked in May, when announcement of the Administration's plan was initially

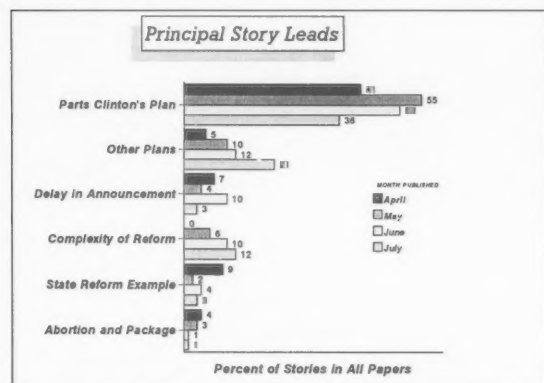
expected. The total number of published items dropped by almost one-third in June, when the postponement was announced. It dropped again, by almost one-half, in July.

From May through July, health care reform moved increasingly off the front page as the proportion of event-driven, "hard" news stories declined. In April hard news stories dominated the coverage, accounting for 67% of all articles. But in May, a month marked by a deluge of "backgrounders," the proportion of hard news stories declined to 43%, while backgrounders climbed, from 13% in April to 44% in May. Articles of commentary also rose, although more slowly, from 13% in May, to 20% in June, to 30% in July.

The shift away from staff-written news to commentary in various forms is shown by the steady monthly increase in "op-ed" pieces. From April, when they comprised less than one-seventh (14%) of the articles on reform, the proportion of "op-ed" pieces rose to 17% in May, 23% in June, and 26% in July.

POLITICAL AND SYSTEM FOCUSED STORIES DOMINATE

Hard-news stories dealt primarily with possible components of the Administration's health care plan. This was the main



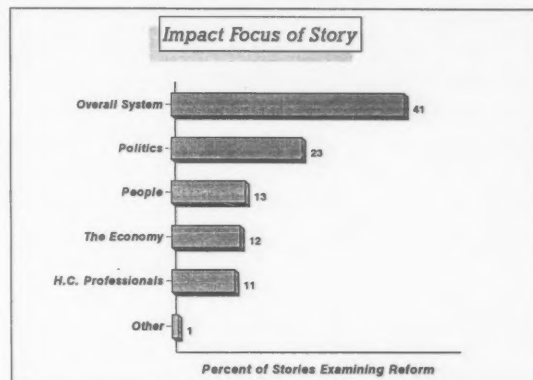
focus of 41% of the news stories in April and 55% of the May stories. It declined in June (50%) and again in July (36%), but remained the single biggest element of news leads.

By July, as commentary made up greater proportion of the coverage, plans put forward in competition to Clinton's became a strong challenger for space. Such competing plans were the subject of only 5% of the news leads in April, but rose to twice that level in May (10%) and June (12%), and doubled again in July (to 21%).

Recurrent themes of newspaper accounts were the organizational features of the plan, methods of payment, extent of patient coverage, and services that would be covered by the Clinton plan. Initially, when the release of a plan seemed imminent, reporting focused primarily on how reform would affect ordinary Americans. But as release of the plan was repeatedly postponed, reporting turned more to examining

the impact of reform on the overall system.

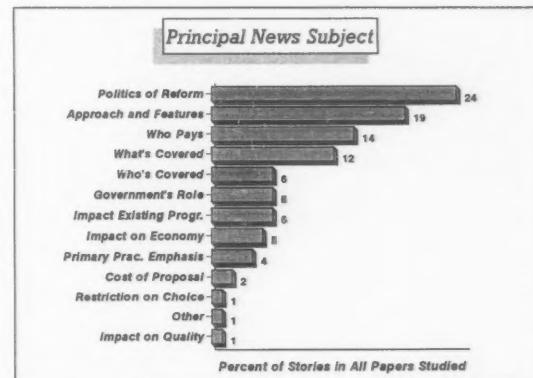
During the four-month study period 12% of articles dealt with the plan's probable impact on the people who will use the health care system. Another 11% considered the consequences for the professionals who dispense health care.



However, most articles, 41%, focused on the impact of reform on the system itself. Another 23% dealt with the political maneuvering surrounding health care reform, and 12% considered possible effects on the national economy. In April, about equal percentages of items dealt with the effect of reform on recipients and on the system, 27% vs. 30%. By July, only about one-fifth as many stories dealt with recipients as with the system, 11% vs. 49%.

THE POLITICS OF REFORM

Stories concerned with "the politics of reform" comprised a sizeable proportion of the coverage throughout the four-month study period. These stories dealt with political issues surrounding reform, such as reactions to competing propos-



als, attitudes of various organizations and interest groups, and positions by members of Congress.

Month to month, politics took up almost one-quarter

(24%) of the total space: in April, 28%; in May, 21%; in June, 24%; in July, 22%. Politics got most attention in *USA Today*, which devoted 37 stories (29% of coverage) to this theme, and the least in *The Wall Street Journal*, which gave it 13 stories (14% of coverage).

Clearly, the Clinton Administration was the dominant political newsmaker in the health care reform coverage — 37% of news featured the Administration, compared to only 7% for Congress. Special interest spokespersons got more ink (13%) than the Congress. Hillary Clinton was the top individual news maker with 13% of articles featuring her as the principal news subject. The President was the dominant subject of only 4% of the articles and about the same percentage that featured Ira Magaziner (3%).

COVERAGE GAPS

The greater focus on institutional interests and political issues, rather than individual interests, left little space for several aspects of health care which deeply concern the general public. Only eight articles focused principally on possible restrictions on physician choice, and three of them were commentary. Only three articles dealt mainly with reform's possible impact on the quality of care, and one was commentary. In contrast, 135 items dealt with various aspects of the politics of reform.

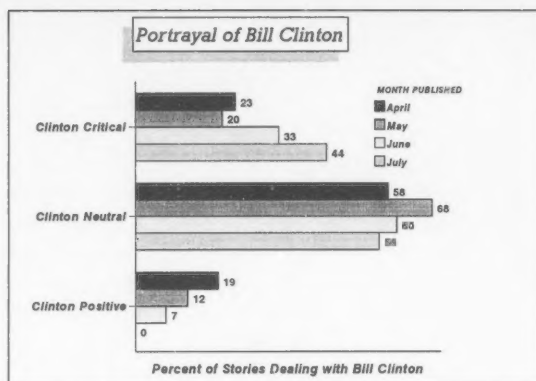
The question of funding abortion illustrates how political issues drove coverage. Whether the plan should cover abortion was the principal subject of more items (19) than the question of whether the plan should cover the presently uninsured (18). Attention to the uninsured peaked in May (8 items), halved in June (4 items), and halved again in July (2 items). Six of the items, one-third of the total, appeared in *The Wall Street Journal*.

Another major subject getting minor attention was mental health. How mental health might be handled, with its implications for treatment of wide-spread afflictions such as alcoholism, drug-addiction, and depression, was the main topic of 11 items, 4 of them commentary.

COVERAGE "SPIN": NEGATIVE, NEUTRAL, POSITIVE

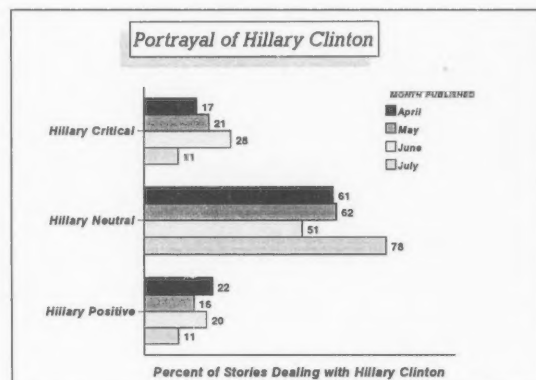
The Times Mirror analysis found that 72% of the articles that dealt with the prospects for reform presented a balance of the favorable and unfavorable elements and hence were judged neutral. The Clintons were treated to fewer balanced portrayals than the reform plan. Hillary Rodham Clinton was treated neutrally in 60% of articles featuring her as a primary or secondary newsmaker, and 61% of Bill Clinton's coverage was deemed neutral.

Unbalanced stories about the prospect of reform tended to be more often pessimistic (21%) than optimistic (7%). So it was for unbalanced stories that featured Bill Clinton; 27%

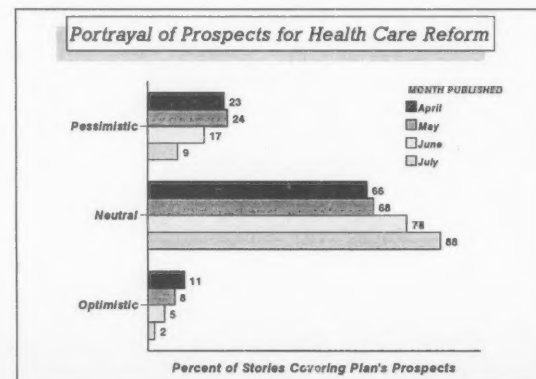


were judged critical and only 12% as complimentary. Hillary's portrayals were more evenly divided between positive (19%) and negative (21%)

The survey found the ratio of negative to positive stories



increased from April to July. This was the case with stories that dealt with prospects of reform as well as those that dealt more personally with President Clinton. The study also found that Hillary was treated better in news stories — 64% were neutral toward her personally — than in commentaries and op-eds, where 63% were negative.



FINDINGS IN DETAIL
OVERALL RESULTS
HEALTH CARE REFORM NEWS CONTENT ANALYSIS
APRIL 1 — JULY 31, 1993

N = 571 NEWS STORIES

1

NEWS SOURCE

Designates the newspaper in which the story appeared.

16%	Los Angeles Times
19%	New York Times
17%	The Wall Street Journal
26%	The Washington Post
22%	USA Today
100	

2

DATE

Designates the month and year of publication.

28%	April 1993
35%	May 1993
24%	June 1993
13%	July 1993
100	

3

POSITION

Designates the positioning of the story within the overall newspaper layout.

21	Page One Story
47	National/International Section
14	Editorial Pages/Section
8	Business Section
2	Metro/Local/Regional Section
2	Lifestyle Section
6	Special Section (Magazine, Science, Health, etc.)
100	

4

STORY LENGTH

Designates story length as measured by number of words in each story. (As in science, the count is rounded to the nearest even digit.)

15	Less than 300
17	300-499
42	500-999
16	1000-1499
9	1500-2499
1	2500 or more
100	

5

WIRE SERVICE

Designates whether the story was filed by a staff reporter, drawn from wire services, or was a Commentary/OP Ed piece written by a non-staff/guest columnist or a story without a byline.

75	Staff Writer
2	Associated Press
.	Knight-Ridder
.	Reuters
19	Commentary/OP ED - Guest
4	No Byline
100	

6

STORY TYPE *

Categorizes the story as:

.	Lengthy Interview
47	News
34	Backgrounder
19	Commentary/OP ED
100	

7

SOURCE OF NEWS STORY *

Designates the origin or source of the news story.

0	News Leak
13	Coverage of opinions, statements or speculation from government or administration officials
5	Coverage of opinions, statements or speculation from non-government officials (i.e., experts, special interests, etc.)
26	Coverage of News Event
37	News Analysis, Investigative/Researched Piece
19	Other
100	

8

USE OF GRAPHICS

Identifies the use of graphics within each story.

17	Graphics used
83	Graphics not used
100	

9

PRINCIPAL NEWS SUBJECT

Identifies the principal news subject in each story

General Categories

24	Politics of Reform
19	Reform: Approaches and Features
14	Who Pays
12	What's Covered
6	Who's Covered
6	Government's Role
6	Impact on Existing Programs
5	Economic Impact
4	Primary Practice Emphasis
2	Cost of Proposal
1	Restrictions on Choice
1	Other
100	

Top Mentioned Individual Themes

2	Price Controls
3	The Uninsured
2	Mental Health
3	Abortion
3	VAT
4	Payroll Taxes
2	Malpractice Reduction
3	Managed Competition
4	Single Payer
5	Clinton Administration (general impact)
8	Task Force
2	Medicare
3	Special Interests

NOTE: THESE NUMBERS SHOULD NOT TOTAL 100%, AS THEY REPRESENT ONLY SELECTED SUBCATEGORIES OF THE GENERAL CATEGORIES LISTED ABOVE.

10

PRINCIPAL AND SECONDARY NEWS SUBJECT *

Designates the prominent health care reform topics examined in each story.

General Categories

34	Politics of Reform
28	Reform: Approaches and Features
20	Reform: Who Pays?
14	Reform: What is covered?
8	Reform: Who is covered?
8	Reform: Government's Role
7	Impact on Existing Programs
8	Economic Impact
5	Primary Practice Emphasis/Reorganizing medical practice
3	Cost of Proposal
3	Restrictions on Choice
49	Other

Top-Mentioned Individual Themes

3	Price controls
4	The uninsured
2	Mental Health
4	Abortion
3	VAT
5	Payroll taxes/Employer mandates
2	Malpractice reduction
5	Managed competition
6	Single payer/Alternative plans
7	Clinton Administration (general impact)
12	Health Care Reform Task Force
2	Medicare
5	Special Interests
5	Congressional role
3	Impact on small business

NOTE: NEITHER SET OF NUMBERS SHOULD ADD TO 100% AS THEY REPRESENT PRINCIPAL AND SECONDARY THEMES.

11

LEVEL OF IMPACT*

Identifies the manner in which the story examines the impact of health care reform.

12	Impact on People, (i.e. Individuals/Families)
11	Impact on Health Care Profession and Professionals
41	Impact on the Overall Health Care System
23	Impact on Politics
12	Impact on the Economy
1	Other
100	

12

RECURRING STORY LEADS*

Designates the specific story lead or "big story," measuring ad hoc issues and events of major proportion.

47	Components of Clinton Plan
11	Components of Alternative Plan(s)
6	Continuing Delay in Announcement of Clinton Plan
6	Complexity of the Health Care Reform Issue
5	State Examples of Reform
3	Abortion and Health Care Reform Package
1	PAC Opposition
1	DNC Lobbying Flap
20	Other
100	

13

PRINCIPAL NEWSMAKER*

Designates the principal newsmaker or spokesperson, if any, portrayed in each story.

Individual Newsmaker

4	President Clinton
13	Hillary Clinton
3	Ira Magaziner

Categorical Newsmakers

37	Clinton Administration
7	Congress
3	Experts
.	Government Experts (not Administration)
13	Special Interest Spokespersons
3	State/Local Officials
2	Pollsters
1	Judiciary
34	Other
100	

14

PRESIDENT CLINTON'S PORTRAYAL*

Designates whether the story is "good press" or "bad press" for President Clinton, his White House/Administration, or family (excluding Hillary Rodham Clinton.)

27	Clinton-Critical
61	Clinton-Neutral or Ambiguous
12	Clinton-Positive
100	(N=199)
65	Not a Clinton Story

15

HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON'S PORTRAYAL*

Designates whether the story is "good press" or "bad press" for Hillary Rodham Clinton, or her staff, including the Health Care Reform Task Force.

21	Hillary Rodham Clinton - Critical
60	Hillary Rodham Clinton - Neutral or Ambiguous
19	Hillary Rodham Clinton - Positive
100 (N=145)	

75 Not a Hillary Rodham Clinton Story

16

PORTRAYAL OF HEALTH CARE REFORM'S PROSPECTS*

An evaluation of the stories portrayal of the likelihood of successful implementation of a health care reform plan.

7	Positive/Optimistic
72	Neutral or Ambiguous
21	Negative/Pessimistic
100 (N=401)	

30 Not a Health Care Reform Story

APPENDIX

HOW HEALTH CARE REFORM NEWS WAS CODED

The following provides further coding information for selected variables within this report.

STORY TYPE

Coders identify how the journalist presented the story. Breaking events, after-the-fact accounts, and coverage of scheduled events are classified as **NEWS**; researched or anecdotal stories are classified as **BACKGROUNDERS**; opinion, commentary, and editorial pieces are classified as **COMMENTARY/OP ED**.

SOURCE OF NEWS STORY

Coders look for the story's origination point. **NEWS LEAKS** would require that an official document had been revealed to the reporter; **COVERAGE OF OPINIONS STATEMENTS OR SPECULATION FROM GOVERNMENT OR ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS** designates those stories generated by government or Clinton Administration sources; the same criteria was applied to **NON-GOVERNMENT SOURCES**, such as health care experts or industry spokespersons; coverage of speeches, press conferences, or breaking events were coded as **NEWS EVENT**; media-generated pieces were coded as **NEWS ANALYSIS, INVESTIGATIVE-RESEARCHED**; and **OTHER** encompasses the remaining stories, including commentary, opinion and editorials.

LEVEL OF IMPACT

If the story examines the impact of health care reform on individuals, patients or their families, it is coded for **PEOPLE**; if it examines the impact on doctors, nurses, et.al., it is coded for **HEALTH CARE PROFESSION AND PROFESSIONALS**; for impact on hospitals, insurance companies, bureaucracies, pharmaceutical companies, or other components of the **OVERALL HEALTH CARE SYSTEM**, it is coded as such; **POLITICS** and **ECONOMICS** stories each have separate impact codes; and those few stories that fall in multiple impact areas are coded as **OTHER**.

RECURRING STORY LEADS

Coders evaluate each story looking for recurrent themes/leads. Typically, thematic trends in press coverage have a finite life. **COMPONENTS OF CLINTON PLAN, COMPONENTS OF ALTERNATIVE PLAN(S), and CONTINUING DELAY IN ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE CLINTON PLAN** were dominant themes in this period, as the Clinton administration repeatedly

postponed its announcement of a health care reform plan.

PRINCIPAL NEWS SUBJECT

Coders identify the most prominent health care reform topic examined in each story. Coding rules require that 1/3 or more of a story be about said topic in order to qualify as the **PRINCIPAL NEWS SUBJECT**.

SECONDARY NEWS SUBJECT

Coders identify the second most prominent health care reform topic, if any, examined in each story. Coding rules require 1/4 of the story be about said topic, and that there can only be a **SECONDARY NEWS SUBJECT** when the coder has first identified a **PRINCIPAL NEWS SUBJECT** within the story.

PRINCIPAL NEWSMAKER

Coders identify the most prominently featured newsmaker, if any, in each story. Coding rules require that 1/2 or more of a story be focused on that newsmaker in order to qualify as the **PRINCIPAL NEWSMAKER**.

PRESIDENT CLINTON'S PORTRAYAL AND HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON'S PORTRAYAL

These "spin" variables require coding when 1/3 or more of a story is about the designated Clinton. Coders determine "spin" by quantifying and evaluating the positive and negative comments, interpretations, and innuendos offered by the journalist or presented as quotes from other sources. If the ratio is 2:1 negative or more, the story is coded as negative; if the ratio is 2:1 positive, it is coded as positive. Those stories that have a positive:negative ratio of less than 2:1 are considered neutral or ambiguous.

PORTRAYAL OF HEALTH CARE REFORM'S PROSPECTS

For each story that discusses the likelihood of health care reform passage, coders evaluate for "spin" by quantifying and evaluating the positive and negative comments, interpretations, and innuendos offered by the journalist or presented as quotes from other sources. The 2:1 rule previously described is used to determine "spin."

The Lower case

Osage City flood brings residents closer together

The Jefferson City (Mo.) Post-Tribune 9/18/93

Daughter Starts Having Sex Before Her Mother Is Ready

The Times Argus (Montpelier, Vt.) 8/15/93

Murder-suicide likely for couple

The Gainesville (Fla.) Sun 6/30/93

Environmental laws often drive plants from cities.

The New York Times 9/20/93

Child vomits on bus left on roadside

Connecticut Post 11/12/92

Lady finds home as lapdog

Express-News (San Antonio, Tex.) 9/21/93



Armin Shimerman (shown here without makeup) is back as Quark in the new 'Star Trek: Deep Space Nine.'

The News & Observer (Raleigh, N.C.) 1/4/93

Award winner

Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas was one of 10 winners of the 1992 Horatio Alger Award, given to Americans who overcome adversity to achieve success.

Bond was set for \$100,000 and trial scheduled for May 4.

(Minneapolis) Star Tribune 1/18/92

Police report: Cops routinely tortured

San Francisco Examiner 2/8/92

Christmas party is chance to score in the workplace

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution 12/9/91

The ceremony is symbolic of those servicemen laid to rest in the cemetery who could not attend the services themselves.

The State Journal-Register (Springfield, Ill.) 6/1/93

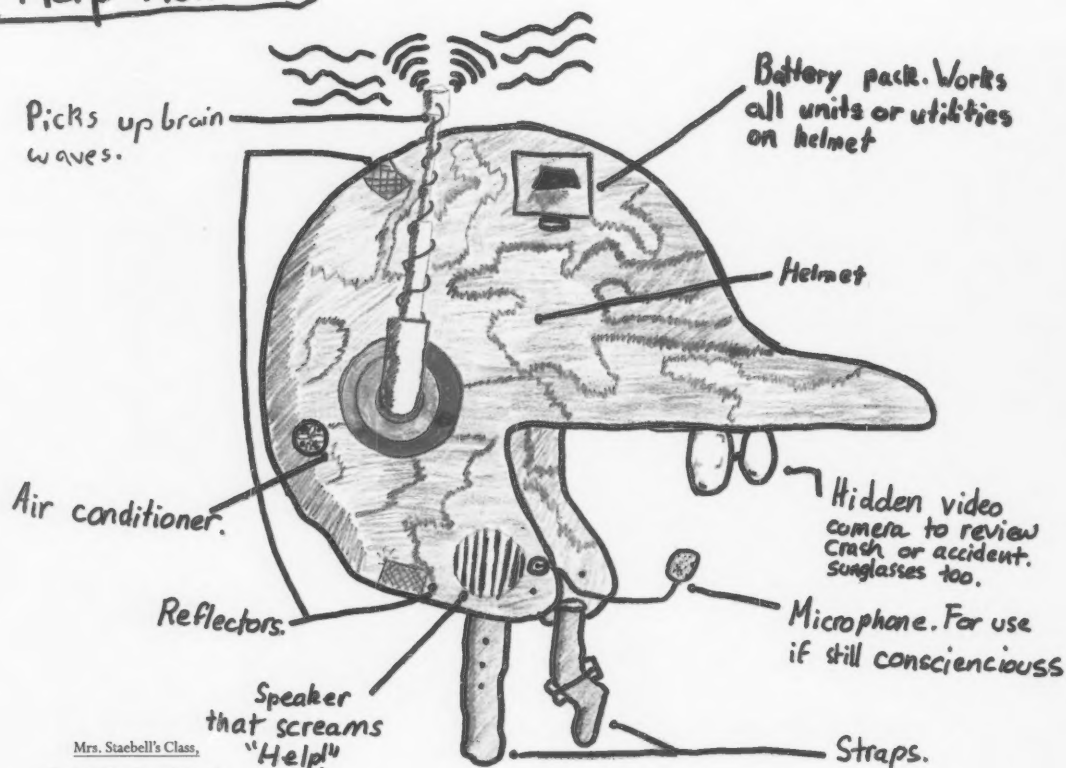
Convicted S&L chief donated to UT

The Daily Texan 9/3/93



IF KIDS DESIGNED COMMUNICATIONS

Help Helmet



Mrs. Staebell's Class,
Grade 5, Elba Central School,
Elba, New York

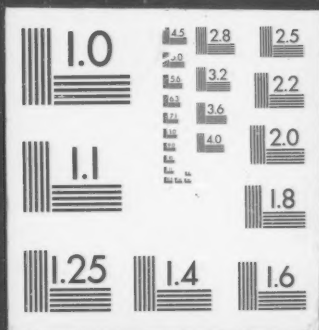
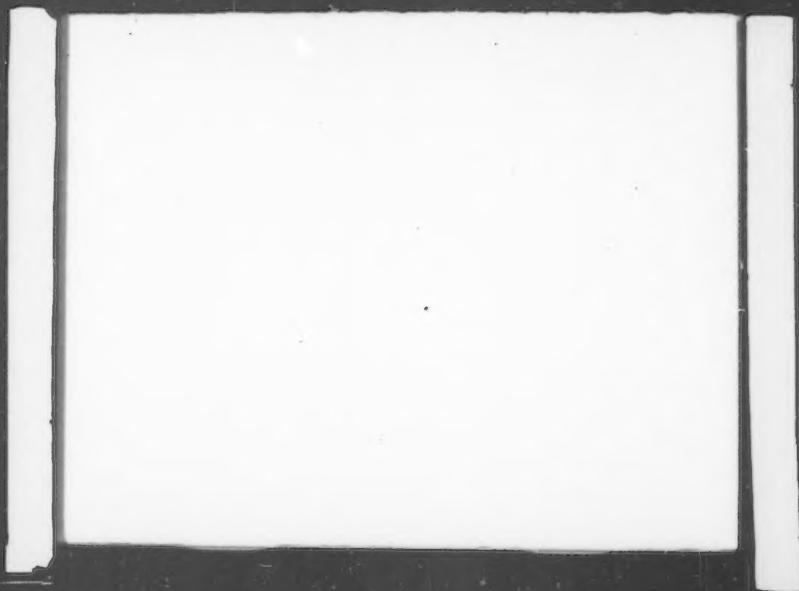
When we asked students in 4,000 schools to design the future, they sent us their

dreams for helping everyone communicate better. What America needs now is a national

communications policy that gives all companies the freedom to help those dreams come true.

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